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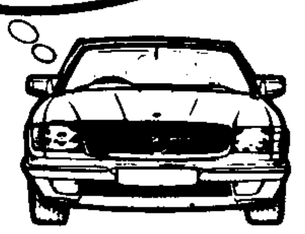

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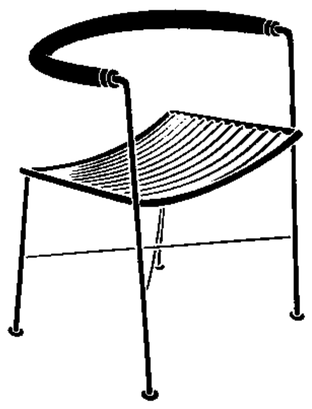

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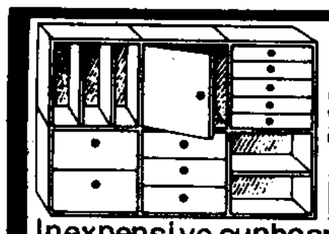

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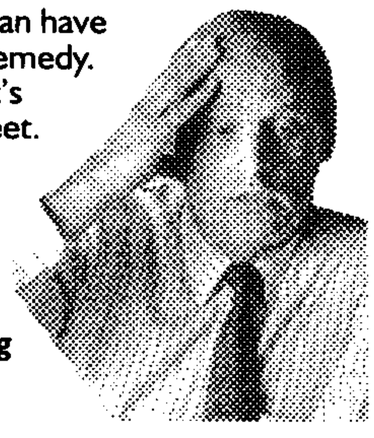

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Gnome

NO ONE likes to be told that their idols have feet of clay, but sometimes it has to be done. In this case it has unfortunately fallen to me to tell the world the harsh truth about the private life of Albert Einstein.

We at Gnome House, the publishing company responsible for the best-selling new biography *Einstein — What A Bastard* by respected author A. Hack, thought long and hard before venturing into print with such a story of lust and unpleasantness. However, at the end of the day, we were swayed by our duty to inform the public and by our responsibility to History itself for an authentic account of this world-shattering genius.

He was after all responsible for my own modest discovery (The Theory of Einstein's Relatives) and the emergence of an extraordinary algebraic formula that covers almost everything I need to know:

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COLOUR SECTION

AN IMPORTANT and hitherto unpublicised participant in the "bastards" conversation in which John Major vented his spleen on his cabinet enemies was Dame Susan Tinson, DBE, head of special events at ITN.

Dame Susan observed ITN's televised interview and took part in the discussion between the prime minister and ITN's political editor, Michael Brunson, before the interview started and when the lights (but not the recording equipment) were turned off afterwards.

Dame Susan, who was honoured in Margaret Thatcher's dissolution list in 1990, has spent her working life at ITN, where she has been a senior editor at *News at Ten* since 1982. Like her mentor and fellow recipient of Thatcher honours, Sir Alistair Burnet, she is also a high Tory. She was once interviewed for the top information job at Conservative central office.

Perhaps the prime minister's tongue was loosened by the presence at the ITN interview of someone he knew he could trust.

AN INTRIGUING insight into the madness of government energy policy was given when British Coal's marketing director Andrew Horsler addressed a high-powered conference this month on the market for coal.

He astonished his audience at Wakefield town hall by saying that British Coal might have to import foreign coal to blend with home produced coal to produce the right consistency for certain customers. Why? Because British Coal's government-imposed pit closure programme had reduced the range of qualities available from its own sources, he admitted.

So, not only has Britain sealed off millions of tonnes of coal, not only are we paying through the nose to keep pits shut and miners on the dole, and not only are we burning gas as if there were no tomorrow — but taxpayers are now paying for British Coal to import foreign coal to supply customers who would otherwise be left without coal by the pit closure programme.

The Tories' "ultimate privatisation" is fast becoming the ultimate cock-up.

EVERY week at the Scott inquiry into arms sales to Iraq, another glorious myth is laid to rest.

The latest is the notion that while the ministry of defence and department of trade sold weapons, secretly and illegally, to Saddam Hussein, the foreign office, whose secretary of state Geoffrey Howe had announced the arms embargo in 1985, behaved properly from start to finish.

Two more witnesses from the FO have put a stop to all that. Mark Higson, a former Iraq desk officer, had some remarkable revelations to make about the "bizarre working practices" at the FO, which included "lying to internal customers" — the inquiry's description of false memoranda which top officials sent each other apparently to amuse themselves.

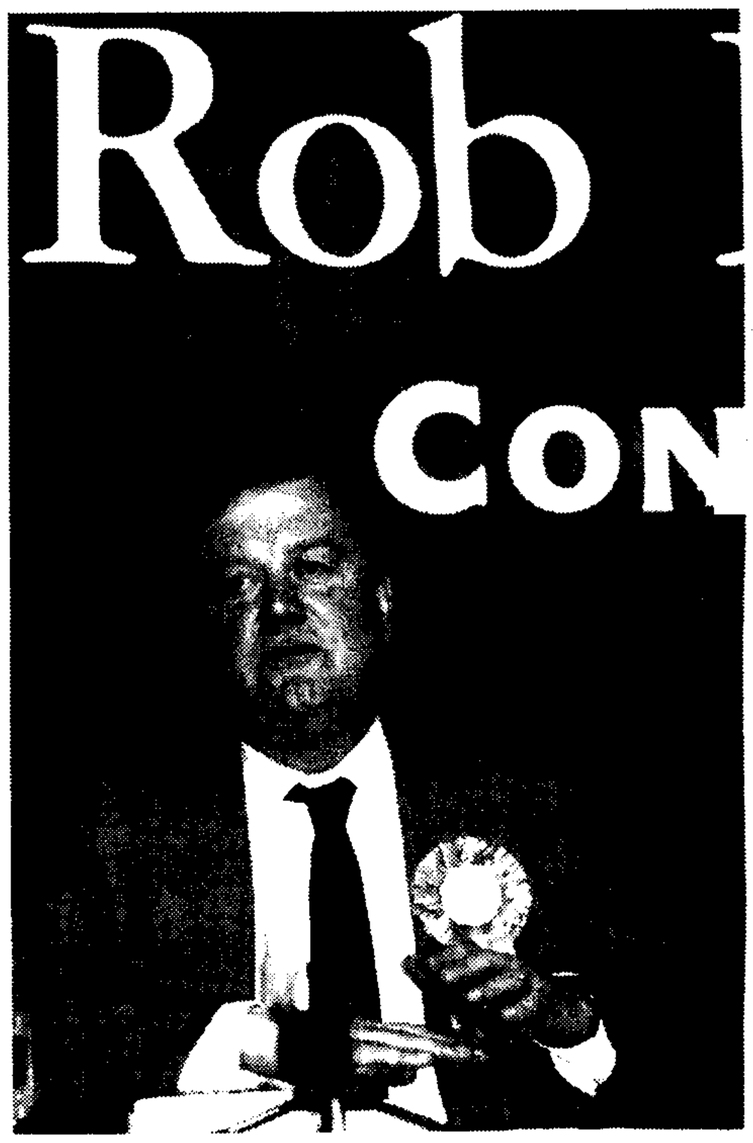
Asked about an intelligence report, Higson explained that FO mandarins "received intelligence information a week after we had seen it in newspapers and magazines". He explained that changes in guidelines on arms sales could not be announced publicly because "there would be a lot of unanswered letters sitting around".

A brilliant impersonation of Terry-Thomas's character Carleton Browne of the FO was put on to the delight of the public present by Sir David Miers, close Oxford chum of Sir Robin Butler, secretary to the cabinet. Sir David's general line was to explain that he was far too important to be dealing with the obscure and trivial business of exporting arms to Saddam, and that such matters were normally dealt with at least four levels below him.

He did, however, admit that he knew that arms pouring into Jordan from Britain were going to Iraq in plain breach of his own department's embargo. Asked whether he had done anything to stop this, he replied that the most useful thing he could do was "to keep in touch with DESO (the defence export sales organisation, part of the ministry of defence)." Repeatedly pressed for details of these meetings, Sir David couldn't remember any name of anyone from DESO he had met; but he did recall that he "bumped into one of their chaps at some airport or other".

Sir David's main point, which did not go down well with an exasperated Lord Justice Scott, was that "your inquiry just doesn't understand how the foreign office works". The clash between Sir David and the lord justice was greeted with open delight by Peter Vereker, a more junior FO official, who had come to the inquiry in the hope — gloriously realised — that Sir David would make even more of a fool of himself than Vereker had the previous week (cf the Vereker Gap, in which the word "Jordan" had been tippexed out of an FO list of arms recipients).

Sir David's performance as under-secretary plainly impressed his superiors. As the arms traffic to Iraq reached its peak in 1989, Sir David was promoted to be ambassador in Athens, and has now been promoted again to be ambassador to The Netherlands.



Kenneth Clarke pictured during a press conference for Tory candidate Rob Hayward at Christchurch

STREET of SHAME

READERS of last Sunday's *Observer* may have thought that the new *Grauniad*-appointed regime was beginning to show results. At last, for the first time in living memory, the paper had a decent scoop — the transcript of John Major's remarks about "bastards".

The truth is rather different. The Major story was written by Paul Routledge and Simon Hoggart — both of whom left the *Observer* this week, having been edged out by the new regime. Hoggart has been shunted off to the *Guardian*; Routledge was invited to take demotion from his present post as political correspondent to a cub reporter's job, with commensurate salary cut. Not surprisingly he decided to quit instead.

Meanwhile, veteran *Observer* hack Anthony Sampson organised a lunch at the Athenaeum last week, at which new editor Jonathan Fenby and his puppet-master Peter Preston were introduced to the paper's octogenarian former editor David Astor and another old *Observer* hand, Michael Davie. The purpose of the lunch was for the pre-Lonrho men to show their goodwill towards the new team.

Alas, the meal was not a great success. Davie, after saying the new paper was much improved in many ways, politely added that he was not a great fan of Melanie Phillips, the paper's megabore columnist — little realising that the hiring of la Phillips is Fenby's proudest achievement. Fenby and Preston spent the rest of the lunch in sullen silence.

OBSERVER

TWO SUNDAYS ago the *Observer* carried an anonymous profile of Lord Rees-Mogg, which, after a stylish resumé of his career, suddenly ended with a violent outburst about his "appalling" failure to preserve the independence of *The Times* from Rupert Murdoch.

"Journalists *can* determine the fate of their newspaper," it asserted, "but it requires nerve, sound judgment and selfless leadership. The treacheries of editors who place self-regard above the integrity of their papers will be remembered and unforgiven by posterity."

What was all that about? *Observer* hacks were in no doubt that it was a none-too-coded attack on Donald "Pixie" Trelford, their lately-departed editor.

JOCELYN "Miss" Targett, until recently editor of the "soft supplements" at the *Sunset Times*, has played a weak poker hand very well in recent weeks.

First he was approached by *Observer* editor Jonathan Fenby, who knew him from *Grauniad* days, with an offer to become the *Observer*'s arts editor. Thus armed, Targett went to *Sunset Times* editor Andrew Neill to explain his dilemma. Neill upped his salary accordingly.

Since then, however, Targett has been wooed by Associated Newspapers supremo Sir David English. Without consulting *Mail on Sunday* editor Jonathan Holborow (who was on holiday), English offered Targett the job of editing the *MoS*'s planned 64-page arts section in return for a salary of £90,000 plus a company Daimler (he is planning to find a new home with a proper parking space). Again, Targett went to see Neill, who wistfully remarked: "I've fought for you once, I can't fight for you again."

With only 17 months' experience as arts editor of the *Guardian* and nine months in his *Sunset Times* job, Targett is now snapping at the heels of Paul Palmer, the *MoS*'s other twentysomething executive (£80,000 pa). Apparently Palmer turned down the arts section job because he wanted to continue working on the main paper, but he cannot be happy with at least one aspect of Targett's elevation.

Palmer has been mentioned as a possible editor of the *Evening Standard* in five years' time. Yet part of English's lure for Targett was the assurance that the editorship of the *Standard* would be coming up in the near future. After his meeting with English, Targett returned to the *Sunset Times* in a state of elation and told Sue Douglas what English had said. She immediately phoned her old *MoS* boss Stewart Steven and told him Targett had been offered his job.

Meanwhile Julie Burchill, the appalling *MoS* columnist who was being courted by Targett and Sue Douglas to go to the *Sunset Times*, has finally jumped ship. Despite an offer to increase her salary to £150,000, she has chosen to join the *Sunset Times* for £125,000 in order to write a weekly film review and one feature a month for the magazine.

Daily Express

AN AIR of gloom pervades the features department of the *Daily Express*, where sub-editors despairingly recycle an endless parade of non-stories on diets, fashion and supermodels. But morale lifted briefly two Fridays ago when the despised features executive Steve Martin — or "Nimrats", as he is known — failed to turn up for work.

On Sunday, when he was next due in, there was again no sign of him. By the beginning of last week, with Martin still inexplicably absent, hacks assumed he must have resigned. One rumour was that he had been lured to the *Daily Mirror*, where his rough manners would be better appreciated.

Just as *Express* hacks were cracking open the champagne to celebrate his departure, however, Nimrats suddenly reappeared on Wednesday. He has yet to offer any explanation for his Agatha Christie-like disappearance, beyond saying mysteriously that he "woke up one day and found myself on a barge in Bremen". What can it all mean?

The Sun

TED GRAHAM, the former Maxwell lackey who is now chief press officer for British Telecom, has written to correct our story about him in the last *Eye*.

We reported that Graham's recent duties had included trying to get a job on the *Sun* for the son of BT chairman Iain Vallance. His approaches were rebuffed by *Sun* editor Kelvin Mackenzie, who told him that the lad should join a local paper or news agency. We said that the tactful Mackenzie also suggested another route — "crawling up the boss's backside like you used to do with Robert Maxwell at the *Daily Mirror*".

Graham tells us that this was inaccurate, and has proved his point by sending a copy of Mackenzie's letter to him. It runs thus:

"Dear Ted. If I got paid a tenner for every one of these letters I receive I would be a millionaire already. At the moment I have three work experience journalists for the summer and therefore there cannot possibly be any vacancies. Can I suggest that if he seriously wants to be a tabloid journalist he should do what I did and work on local papers or agencies, or otherwise do what you did, and arselick his way onto the *Mirror* training scheme. Yours sincerely, Kelvin."

We are glad to put the record straight. Meanwhile, we note that Graham admits that he does indeed perform such services as trying to find jobs for the boss's son. BT shareholders must be delighted to know that their chief press officer's time is used so constructively.

THE NORTHERN branch of Lord Stevens' Express Newspapers is not pulling its weight in the battle to rid Britain of the scourge of trade unionism.

The *Express*-owned *Yorkshire Post* and *Yorkshire Evening Post* recently decided to derecognise the National Union of Journalists. Naturally, not a word about the journos' vote for industrial action in favour of their union rights, nor their public rallies, nor a Commons motion in their support, appeared in the news pages of the *Getsworse* or its northern sister.

This is in keeping with the paper's normal news service, however, where outlandish pay rises given to prominent people are regularly attacked — unless they happen to be for Lord Stevens, whose recent 18 per cent rise took his annual salary to a miserly £400,840.

Imagine the management's surprise when its policy of silence on the union recognition row was pierced in the classified advertising pages of the *Yorkshire Evening Post*. The NUJ had placed an advert calling for "Trade union rights at Yorkshire Post newspapers", as well as publicising a demonstration outside the paper's Leeds headquarters against the *Post*, and the dim-wits let it through. Then again, 88 quid is 88 quid.

THE INDEPENDENT

STILL reeling from his failure to buy the *Observer*, Andreas Whittam Strobes is relaunching the *Indescribablyboring* in September with all sorts of fancy new supplements, in a desperate attempt to revive its plummeting circulation. He is also hoping for some PR advice from Mrs Thatcher's former spin-doctor, Sir Tim "The Nose" Bell, on how to improve the paper's image.

Earlier this month, however, while Strobes was busily wooing Bell, the *Independent* magazine published a scathing piece about Sir Tim's recent record, drawing attention to the tarnished image of such Bell clients as British Airways and the fugitive tycoon Octav Botnar.

A furious Bell threatened to sue unless he was given an immediate and grovelling apology. The editor of the *Indie* mag, silver-haired lothario John Walsh, boldly replied that he saw no reason to apologise. Far from following through with his promised writ, Bell sulkily retreated.

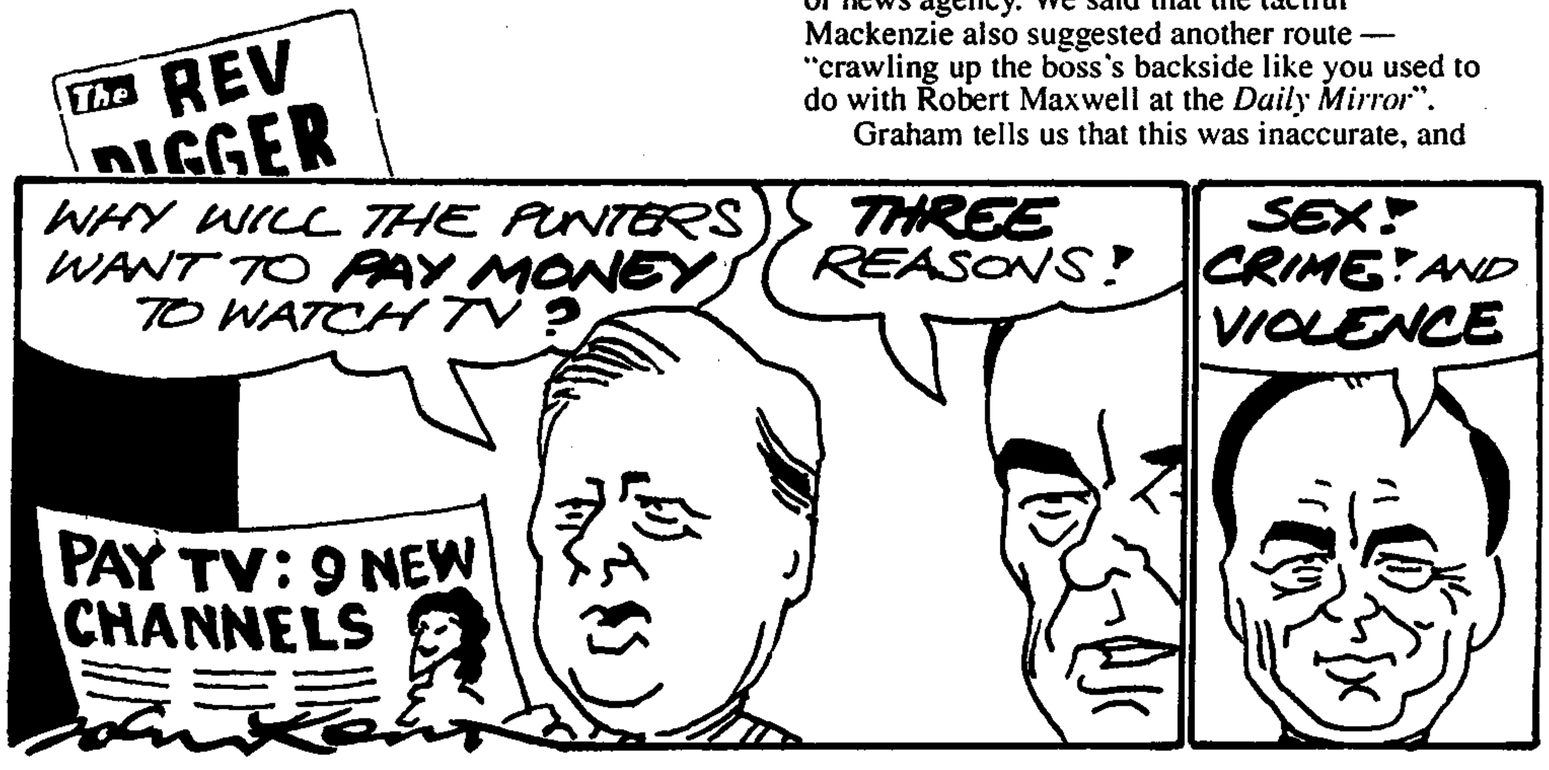
Whether he will still be prepared to dispense PR tips to the *Indescribablyboring* remains to be seen. *Indie* hacks are also waiting with interest to see how Strobes will avenge himself against the magazine for its spirited display of independence.

THE Saudis are showing how highly they regard freedom of the press.

Prince Khaled, the official commander of the Desert Storm forces, also owns *Al Hayat*, an Arabic daily, and *Al Wasat*, an Arabic weekly, both of which are based in London.

Their coverage is as independent as the censors of two dozen wobbly Arab governments will allow, and the penalty for overstepping the mark can be severe, as *Al Wasat* recently found.

It published an interview with the daughter of Syrian general Mostafa Tlass, whose name had been "linked" with a former French minister. Even though she denied the accusations, the furious general called President Assad of Syria, who called King Fahed of Saudi Arabia, who called Prince Khaled, who called *Al Wasat* and sacked the editor. More tortuous than Murdoch, perhaps, but just as effective.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WHY WILL THE PUNTERS WANT TO PAY MONEY TO WATCH TV?
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SPEAKER Betty Boothroyd's casting vote against her party and her convictions on the issue of the Maastricht treaty's social chapter was not her only recent intervention on behalf of Tory ministers.

On Monday 19 July, Mo Mowlem intervened from Labour's frontbench after a question to the chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, William Waldegrave. She asked about the revelation at the Scott Iraqgate inquiry that Waldegrave, while a foreign office minister, had given a completely false picture of the state of the arms embargo on Iraq, saying in a letter to MPs that the embargo was in place when he and his officials knew perfectly well that it had been substantially lifted.

Boothroyd went berserk, demanding that Mowlem withdraw her slur on Waldegrave's integrity and her suggestion that he had misled the House. Mowlem protested more than once, and Boothroyd's insistence on withdrawal on pain of suspension took MPs by surprise.

Many MPs feel Boothroyd is becoming more and more a creature of the man who stands by her side throughout Commons proceedings, Mr Nicholas Bevan CB. Mr Bevan came to this important position as Madam Speaker's top adviser from the cabinet office, where he was moved on Major's suggestion last year. Previously, from 1985, he had been an assistant under-secretary of state at the ministry of defence, in which capacity he gave evidence to the Commons trade and industry select committee on Iraqgate in February 1992.

He was questioned closely on two matters. First, was it true that Sir Hal Miller, then a Tory MP, had approached the MoD three times to ask if it was safe to make a "supergun" for Iraq and export it there. "We have not been able to trace any such dealings," was Bevan's reply. Earlier this year, Sir Hal told Lord Justice Scott that he had indeed spoken three times to MoD officials about the supergun, and gave chapter and verse.

Secondly, what about Nicholas Ridley's statement, as secretary of state for trade and industry in April 1990, that the government had only heard about the supergun "recently"?

Mr Bevan admitted that the defence ministry knew about the supergun "at the end of November/early December in the previous year" — some five months before Ridley said it had only recently found out about it. Was this "recent"? "Yes," said Mr Bevan. "That seems to me to fall within the definition of 'recently' ".

If any MPs are brave enough to allege that Mr Bevan may have been economical with the truth in his evidence to MPs. let them try to get that past the speaker, Betty Boothroyd.

WHAT has Labour MP Bob Waring been discussing with the Serbian war lord Slobodan Milesovic in Belgrade?

Labour colleagues in Waring's Liverpool West Derby constituency are intrigued by what they call the "Slob and Bob Show": the MP has been seen on UK TV with Milesovic in the Serbian capital.

Such appearances do not seem to be in the best traditions of the new image Labour party. Indeed, Bob's constituents are more likely to identify with the victims of Sarajevo than the marauding, murderous Serbs; and some have taken to referring to the strange partnership as "Waring and Goering".

BEFORE being entrusted with Britain's Trident submarine fleet (see *Eye* 824), US contractor and Tory party contributor Brown & Root had already proved itself on the Docklands light railway (DLR) in east London.

Back in 1991 John Major revealed his brilliant idea to transfer (presumably as a transitional step to full privatisation) the Docklands light railway from London Transport, which has decades of experience of running trains, to the London Docklands development corporation, which knows nothing about trains. LDDC quickly decided to wash its hands of such awkward matters as operating and upgrading a railway, and appointed Brown & Root as prime contractor to take responsibility and dish out and oversee work by sub-contractors.

More recently, rail workers formerly with sub-contractor Grant Lyon Eagre have told the press they were pressurised into taking short cuts while relaying DLR track at Canary Wharf. They say they tried to change the shoddy working practices but left the firm having failed to do so. The railway inspectorate says it will close DLR if its investigation reveals serious flaws.

The track in question was relaid from October 1992 — the same month Brown & Root became prime contractor for the DLR.

MIRROR Group chief executive David "Rommel" Montgomery was grilled mercilessly by a Commons committee last week about his treatment of staff, more than 100 of whom have been sacked without warning in recent months.

"Are you aware that you're the worst company that's ever come before us?" asked the committee chairman, Labour MP Ron Leighton. "You sound like a throwback to the days of Dickens. It's an outrageous and disgraceful way to treat employees."

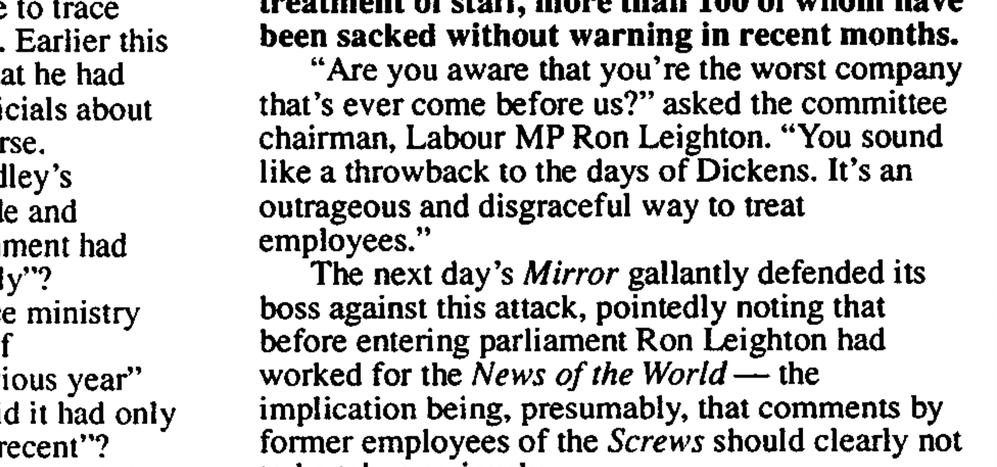
The next day's *Mirror* gallantly defended its boss against this attack, pointedly noting that before entering parliament Ron Leighton had worked for the *News of the World* — the implication being, presumably, that comments by former employees of the *Screws* should clearly not to be taken seriously.

Perhaps the *Mirror* had forgotten that David "Rommel" Montgomery is himself a former editor of the *News of the Screws*.

'Backbiter'

MPs FOR HIRE

PART TEN: THE DRUGS AND CHEMICAL INDUSTRY



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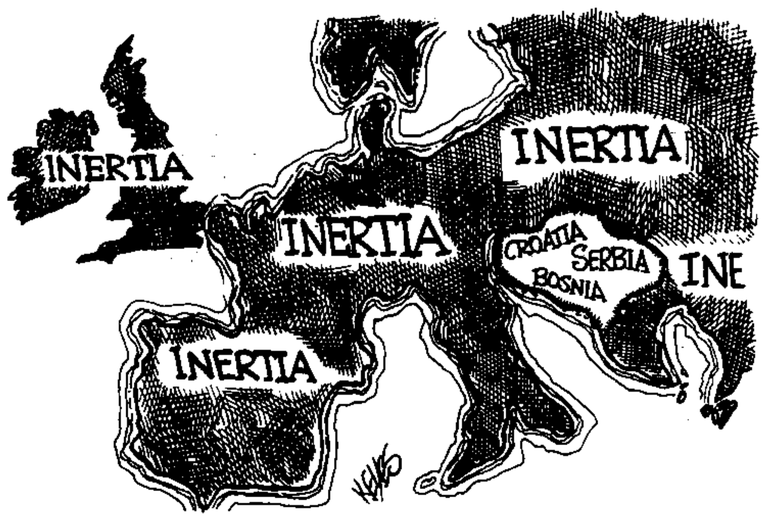


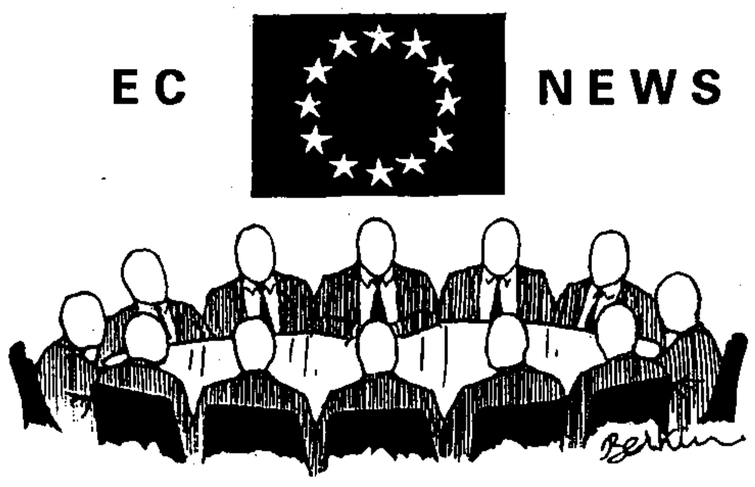
UN NEWS

THE assassination in January of Sean Devereux, the British UN worker in Kismayo, brought home forcefully the dangers of working for the new world order.

However, when the UN children's fund screened a BBC documentary on his life at the UN HQ and approached the British mission for sponsorship to commemorate one of her finest sons, the response was a firm and stingy "no".

Luckily the Irish mission rushed into the gap to provide hospitality, happier to acknowledge Sean's Irish parentage than the foreign office was to recognise his British birth. The UK diplomats will of course eventually get their semi-automatic gongs for keeping their noses clean and their tear ducts dry.

EC NEWS



ONE of Europe's most blatant breakers of anti-monopoly legislation, Electricité de France, has avoided going before the European court thanks to a last-minute, half-hearted promise by the French government to "review" the situation.

The European Commission had been threatening to go to law to force France to open her market to outside competition. The French were in breach of anti-monopoly rules while Michael Heseltine was claiming hypocritically that he could not block their exports of subsidised electricity to Britain because *we* would have been in breach of EC rules in doing so. In fact they were the ones outside the law, and they continue to dump surplus electricity on Britain, at an artificially low price, obliging us to shut down coal mines.

EdF enjoys massive French state subsidies (see *Eyes* 811 and 815) and huge loans at reduced rates of interest. It sells electricity primarily to pay interest on the loans, which are comparable with those of a debt-ridden third world country. On that basis it can offer cheap electricity — until the bills arrive for de-commissioning its 80 nuclear power stations.

The commission had asked about the monopoly but had been refused information. Just when it was taking France to court, the government promised, probably meaninglessly, to "review" EdF's monopoly powers. In reality, it can do little. It might wish to put the giant company on the market, but as the British government found when it privatised the Central Electricity Generating Board, there were no takers for the nuclear stations, and EdF is almost entirely nuclear.

The French government is thinking of selling shares to enable investors to "own" about 10 percent of EdF. They would have no control of it; its monopoly would remain; and there would be no other generator competing for the market. They hope this will satisfy the commission, which has always been too scared to take on Paris.

Grovel

I KNOW it is easy to sniff at the Groucho, Soho's posey rendezvous for ponytailed *meejah* types, but the club's Colombian evenings are quite literally out of this world.

Dining there the other evening I was most impressed by the facilities: sugar, salt, flour — every kind of white powder was in abundance. No more shall I snort at the Groucho's reputation for meanness.

Much less attractive, however, is the club's growing reputation as a safe environment in which predatory oldies can meet and befriend gullible youngies of the opposite genital persuasion.

Indeed, so popular is this activity now that some "Members" of Parliament have even travelled down from as far away as Scotland to discuss parliamentary Ugandan issues with club staff.

● *TRAMP, the tacky Jermyn Street nightclub for Sunset Times style section fans and other "trash", whether of the Euro-, transatlantic or domestic variety, had never seen anything like it, I am reliably informed.*

Two middleaged would-be lotharios, attired in Scottish kilts, attempted to "interpret" various soul and disco classics from the seventies, much to the stomach-turning amazement of fellow revellers.

My inquiries reveal that these two representatives of Scottish culture were none other than Sunset Times editor Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill, and Tory party vice-chairman Gerald Malone, both of whom had come on from the Blue Ball, a Tory fund-raising event.

Alas, I am in no position to relate whether the gentlemen observed the same rule as the Edinburgh Black Watch regarding the wearing of undergarments. Perhaps their dancing partners could advise?

I AM SORRY to hear that Brian MacArthur, who launched *Toady* newspaper on an ungrateful world, has been pipped at the post in his bid to be the Prince of Wales's new press secretary.

Brian was on a shortlist of two and went to see Charles at flower-bedecked Highgrove, where each man greatly took to the other. No doubt the prince's ears were ringing with praise for the candidate from Belinda Harley, his PR amanuensis who also happens to be a former *amour* of Brian's.

Sadly, though, protocol ruled and some civil servant or other has got the job. Brian must remain at Chateau Wapping, where the organic vegetables all sit at desks and pour shit over eachother.

LITTLE BO BLEEP

"I've packed the picnic things"

TED EDGAR, pillar of the showjumping community, has, it seems, been caught telling porky pies.

Last year a lorry containing Everest Double Glazing horses tried to overtake a stationary queue of traffic outside the Newbury Show. Having driven down the wrong side of the road, the transporter then turned left at the T-junction, across the traffic, colliding with a stationary Fiesta, denting the car's right-hand side.

Edgar, who was driving the transporter, immediately accepted full liability and offered to pay for any damage, in front of several witnesses, including a show steward. The driver of the car, David Waite, subsequently received a letter from Edgar's insurer, Norwich Union, stating that its client held him fully responsible and was accusing him of having cut in with his Fiesta.

Edgar continued to deny liability until Waite was able to produce the names of the independent witnesses — the drivers of the two cars immediately behind his. A cheque for £730 duly arrived.

● *I AM VERY worried about John Patten, secretary of state for education, who has been indisposed for some weeks now.*

Viral gastroenteritis is the official answer, but many of his close advisers are worried that the stress of his isolation in recent arguments about school tests might have had even more serious consequences.

Especially worrying was a recent question put anxiously by the education secretary to his close circle: "Do you think I still look like a stuffed panda?"

What can this mean?

IN CHRISTCHURCH to do my bit for the Conservatives' by-election effort, I bump into the party's moustachioed candidate, Robert Hayward. He speaks warmly of his admiration for the many fine qualities of one of his by-election helpers, 21-year-old Damien Sansom.

Alas, Hayward had to do without young Damien's talents for the last week of the campaign. Sansom hurriedly checked out of his hotel one morning, in a state of apparent distress, after a mysterious late-night visit to his room by a fellow-Tory. If Conservative central office holds an inquest into the party's performance at Christchurch, it ought perhaps to inquire just why this member of Hayward's team had to leave town so early.

Pip Pip!

Pseuds Corner

What music would you have played at your funeral?

This question is syntactically flawed. Do you mean what music would I have played at my funeral if I happened to die? Or if I had happened to be there? As I'm not dead it's all rather academic. Come to think of it, if I was dead I wouldn't be able to play anything at said funeral, would I? Bloody stupid question. Or is it me that's syntactically flawed? If it is, I must tell Faber & Faber.

PETE TOWNSHEND
Q Magazine

I normally look at myself in the mirror when I'm on the phone. It's a habit I picked up from my old office where I had a dressing table for a desk. I don't do it out of vanity. It's just that I feel like I'm in some mind of weird soap opera where I'm the star and audience. I try not to see my life as a movie but it does tend to be that way.

SARA BLONSTEIN
of 'The Pussy Posse'
Sunday Times Magazine

Renaissance man Jeffrey Archer takes Bookcase on a grand tour of his art collection, his bookshelf and his intriguing new novel.

W.H. Smith Bookcase Magazine

If you sing a-cappella you live by the resonance of words. [Marc] Almond's breath is the most subtle interpreter of pain, cruelty, awareness of advancing age, death — an emotional spectrum which is otherwise the business of poetry. His voice breaks into our inner fissures, like segmenting an orange.

JEREMY REED
Casablanca

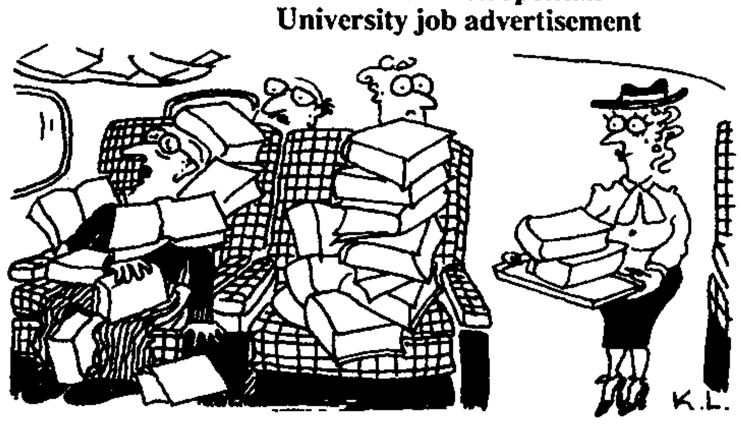
The Department of Fine Arts is a proven quality Research Centre which has expanded its courses from four to seven in the last year. The Head of Department of Fine Arts, John Hyatt, is pleased to announce consequent new employment opportunities and to invite Artist Lecturers and Researchers with intellectual vision to join us confidently surfing the cultural currents to the future, endlessly supported upon the revolving spirits of the past.

Manchester Metropolitan
University job advertisement

Lecturer/Senior Lecturer in Fine Arts
(Four 0.4 Full-time One-Year Contracts)
B.A. (Hons) Interactive Arts

This is a new course. You will form part of a team of staff and students, collaborating with attitude, drive, sensitivity and reliability on an ideas-led, radically democratic, holistic course, using tools ranging anywhere between 2B, TV, squeegee and VR.

Manchester Metropolitan
University job advertisement



Having seen the error of my ways, I no longer take dense theoretical tomes to read on planes. No, novels are now the required inflight reading: novels, mind you, with a hint of theory.

GEOFF DYER
Guardian

CONTRIBUTORS: S. Geary, E. Bell, N. Macdonald, E. Strobes, R. Francis, Lord Gnome, T.S. Brown, J. Wood.

£10 paid for entries

NOOKS and CORNERS

SI MONUMENTUM requiris, circumspice... **but you will probably look around in vain if the gravestone you seek is in the gentle care of the London borough of Lambeth.**

A society must be judged by the way it treats its dead, and visitors to Britain — whether from America or Europe — are usually shocked by the state of most of our cemeteries: neglected, overgrown, vandalised. Perhaps the Victorians were too obsessed with death, but deracinated modern Britain has gone to the other extreme. Living only for the present, we are terrified of past reminders of death and so turn our backs on the wonderful churchyards and cemeteries, gravestones and monuments which wiser generations created.

As Britain returns to pre-Christian barbarism, much of the destruction inflicted on funerary monuments is simply the result of brutish vandalism. But much is officially sanctioned — by tidy-minded clergymen or clinical, death-fearing modernists who stack gravestones around churchyard walls to make neat open spaces of lawn which are easy for the motor-mower.

Such deliberate historical amnesia is a crime against civilisation. We allow Mr Ramadan Guney, the faithful friend of faithless Asil Nadir (who was long ago cited in this column as the potential spoiler of Burley-on-the-Hill), to own and to alter the famous Brookwood cemetery at Woking. And Lambeth council is permitted to ravage West Norwood cemetery.

Laid out in 1837 by the South Metropolitan Cemetery Company, West Norwood was one of the new picturesquely landscaped urban cemeteries inspired by Père Lachaise in Paris, along with Highgate, Nunhead and Kensal Green. During the rest of the 19th century, magnificent monuments were raised over the bones of the various worthies who had lived nearby. Things began to go wrong in our own callous, murderous century: the entrance lodge went in 1936 and, following war damage, the nonconformist and Anglican chapels — designed by William Tite — were demolished in 1955 and 1960. In 1966 the long neglected, overgrown cemetery was taken over by Lambeth.

Lambeth council immediately began a "lawn conversion" programme in a misguided and totally impractical attempt to bring the cemetery back to its supposed condition in the 1840s. The London county council (general powers) act of 1955, under whose powers the work was carried out, required that any memorial removed be replaced by a marker stone or memorial tablet and that a record of each memorial should be deposited with the registrar-general. The council has been unable to demonstrate that it has complied with either requirement. The lawn conversion attracted many complaints and accusations of maladministration, but Lambeth carried on regardless — principally motivated by a desire to cut costs by using mechanical diggers and mowers.

To quote Chris Brooks's *Mortal Remains*, a devastating indictment of our maltreatment of Victorian cemeteries published four years ago, "apparently indiscriminate clearance continues to devastate more and more of the historic cemetery. Even worse has been the appalling damage that Norwood has suffered at the hands of presumably unsupervised cemetery employees. With scandalous unconcern, scores of monuments in areas of the greatest historic interest have been systematically smashed... Many monuments in perfect condition had been destroyed — sometimes, incredibly enough, by having had lumps of masonry hurled at them. Others were simply heaved over and abandoned. Sledgehammers, crowbars and other wrecking tools were lying about nearby. Despite complaints, no explanation of substance was offered."

In response to this municipal vandalism, the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery were formed and English Heritage and the Victorian Society took a close interest. But still it goes on. Lambeth declared part of the cemetery a conservation area, but the cemetery managers continue to ignore the advice of its planning department — assuming any is offered. No understanding of the nature and interest of a landscaped cemetery is demonstrated: drives and paths have been asphalted, hideous signposts erected; the site of the grave of the journalist and editor Laman Blanchard is marked by a litter-bin.

A few years ago it emerged, to the embarrassment of Lambeth council, that the greater part of Norwood cemetery remains consecrated ground and that faculties should have been obtained for the work carried out. Only in May did Lambeth make an initial approach to the diocese of Southwark, and the chancellor has now summoned the superintendent of the cemetery to appear before him in September before deciding whether a restoration order should be made.

Meanwhile, the Lambeth vandals are planning yet more "lawn conversion" and have not yet explained the disappearance of two grade II listed monuments — to John Garrett and to the engineer Sir William Cubitt. And this is the sort of local authority to which Jocelyn Stevens is prepared to entrust the safety of grade II listed buildings under his idiotic "Forward Strategy"!

'Piloti'

Sally Deedes

WHEN Josephine Bacon received her last VAT demand she completed it immediately and sent it back to customs and excise by return in the business reply envelope provided.

She then left the country for three weeks and was disturbed on her return to find that the Post Office had returned the envelope and its contents, torn up and marked "postage unpaid".

She rang the customs office at Thomas Paine House, London EC1, and demanded to know what was going on. The was told the business reply licence had expired and had not been renewed. It had taken customs and excise three weeks to work out why no one had replied to its letters!

I was told that the VAT office had recently moved and that a business reply account had not been set up. And what about the public who are always penalised for being late with their VAT payments? "As long as they can prove when the letter was posted they have no need to worry," a spokesperson said.

POLICE 5

OFFICERS from scandal-ridden West Midlands police have found a useful way to spend their working hours. A group of WPCs dress up as hookers and stand on the pavement in Birmingham's red-light district while male colleagues kerb-crawl them, jokingly trying to solicit sex.

This sophisticated new crime-fighting wheeze came to light when officers decided to nab a Birmingham-based detective constable who had tried to solicit two undercover female cops while in a tired and emotional state. The arresting officer later admitted that police never "do" their own kind, but made an exception this time to teach the officer a lesson.

The detective constable was arrested after driving up to two WPCs in Borstal Heath (*sic*) and asking them how much they charged for sex. In court he claimed the request was only a joke since he recognised them. He was found not guilty.

During the hearing a Birmingham WPC, under oath, admitted that officers often played pranks on policewomen posing as prostitutes to trap kerb-crawlers. Presumably the high-spirited cops ensure no nasty crimes are due to take place anywhere in the West Midlands while they have their fun.

TV EYE

A Is For Abba

(BBC1)

JOHN WHISTON'S jolly BBC1 documentary *A Is For Abba* was another example of the fashionable propo-sition that popular culture should sometimes be taken very seriously indeed.

For example, just after one interviewee (Ray Davies of the Kinks) had denigrated Benny and Bjorn's compositions as "muzak", lift music, another interviewee (a student of classical music, who had done his master's thesis on harmonic structure in the songs of the Swedish mega-group) explained that "Money Money Money" boasted an incredibly complicated form, in which pairs of notes were repeated and varied, such that each "Money" in the title was subtly different from the other two.

That may very well be complete tosh — a musicologist's late April Fools' jape — but there was something brilliant about the thought that Benny and Bjorn might amount to more, in certain specialist lights, than two bad haircuts and an English dictionary with a number of pages unfortunately stuck together with marmalade.

If you are sceptical about this kind of thing, then you are sceptical, but — although Square Eyes is not ready yet to write a masters' thesis on BBC1 summer programmes — it is possible to argue, taking up the spirit of the documentary, that *A Is For Abba* was, in its own way, an unusually complex and revealing piece of popular culture.

The first significance of *A Is For Abba* is that it is one of the first pieces of BBC1 commissioning and scheduling to be purely the work of Alan Yentob, the new channel controller, who had previously mainly been shuffling building bricks left by his predecessor. One of the marks Yentob made on BBC2, his former port, was presentational — in the use of smart logos and trails and themed evenings — and, at BBC1, he is already showing an impressive ability to dress up what, if not precisely turkeys, are pretty old chickens.

For example, in the week of the opening of *Jurassic Park*, BBC1 screened, on consecutive nights, the 1970s movies *Jaws* and *Westworld*. Two dusty old reruns padding out the summer nights? Well, yes; but rarely have desperation and thriftiness been so elegantly done. One previous film by the director of *Jurassic Park*; one previous film written by the writer of *Jurassic Park*. Repeats they may be, but the difference between ordinary second showings and these is that between serving turkey sandwiches on Boxing Day and stir-fried cajun turkey with wild rice.

In the same way, the BBC1 schedule on the night which included *A Is For Abba* was an impressive piece of lateral thinking. The documentary about the group — the only new programme — was followed by a repeat of *French & Saunders*, in which the girls did their own Abba skit, and then another showing for Abba's in-concert movie.

This was a startling example of the way in which presentational cleverness can distract from the limitations of a television channel. Watching the trailers for the evening, Square Eyes thought, "bloody clever that, remembering there was a French & Saunders Abba sketch", long before Square Eyes thought: hang on, BBC1 is producing a *themed Abba evening*. But such is the Yentob trick. Already, he has made BBC1 an exciting, clever, glossy channel. He lacks only one thing. Programmes.

In terms of Yentob's attempts to make good that shortfall, *A Is For Abba* was also hugely revealing. The programme comes out of the television archive unit, a department established to (if you are a media studies student) remind the audience of the medium's heritage or (if you are a viewer) to disguise repeats: the stir-fried cajun turkey approach. It was this unit which fed single-subject festivals like *TV Hell*, which helped Yentob's BBC2 to develop its image.

One of Yentob's riskier strategies at the bigger-audience channel is to move across BBC2 hits and hope that they grow. *A Is For Abba* — and the shows packed round it — were the first example of this technique: an archive-based piece in a themed evening. The only difference is the size of audience required.

A Is For Abba suggested that Yentob's approach to extending the audience will involve a kind of split-level programming, with the same shows containing sections aimed at different parts of the audience. At one level, the documentary was a "Where Are They Now?" piece, filling us in on who the Swedes married after divorcing each other, and running lots of clips of old *Top of the Pops* shows. At another, it include the surprising musicological evidence quoted above and a bravura explanation by Elvis Costello of how Benny and Bjorn's song-writing deepened and darkened after the divorces. Yentob would call this ironic populism, with the populism bringing in the coach-loads and the irony appealing to the Chianti set.

All hail, then, to Yentob for making, so far, a little go a long way. But it is unlikely to be enough to be a genius at serving mutton dressed as lamb. Soon he is going to need some real New Zealand tenderloin.

'Square Eyes'

I-BSkyB

20 big-value facts on village of TWENTY

6 Film fan Paul Allen, 26, installed the only Sky dish in Twenty last year. He said: "All my neighbours come in and watch it."

The Sun

CONTRIBUTOR: Barry Barber.

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

MEDIA NEWS

IN SEPTEMBER, the London talk-radio station LBC will discover whether it can hang on to the licence it has held for the past 20 years. It has two main rivals competing for the franchise.

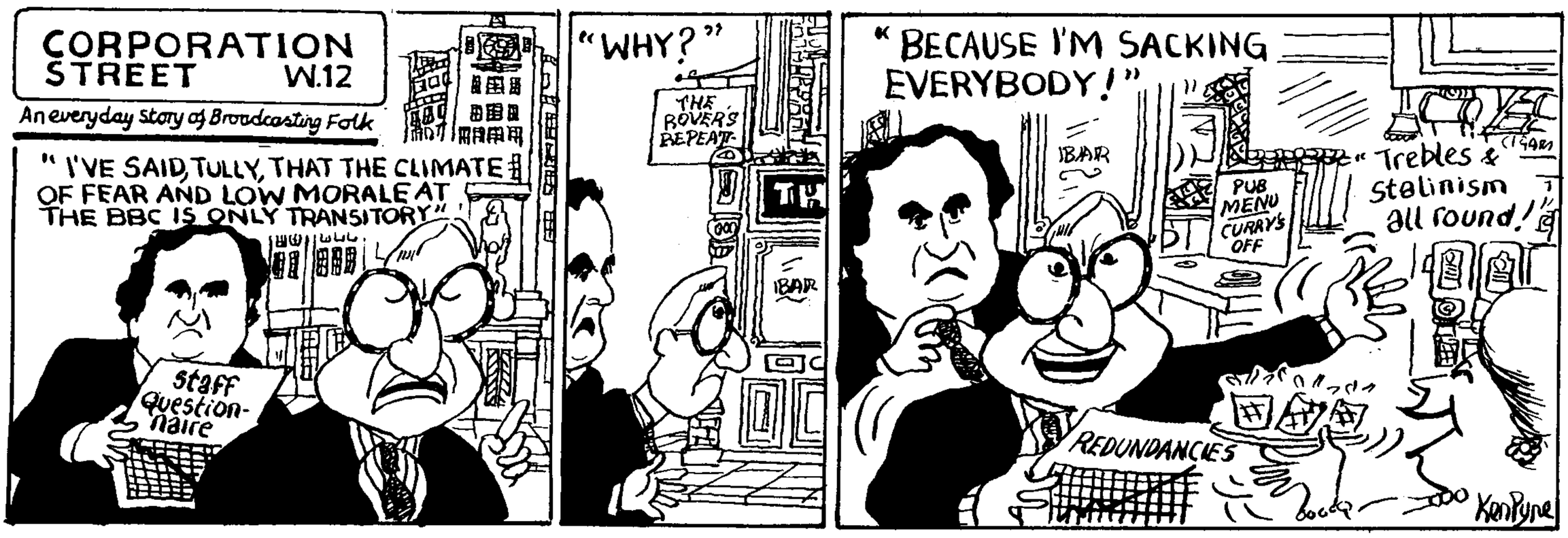
One is Lord Rothermere's Associated Newspapers — whose bid has already been nicknamed "London Monopoly Road", since the company already owns London's only evening newspaper and seems determined to extend its stranglehold on the capital's media.

The other is Guinness Mahon, the merchant bank, which has become very keen on "investment opportunities" in the media. Guinness Mahon recently set up a "development capital fund" to look out for similar opportunities, advised by a panel of experts such as Sue Freestone, publishing director of Hutchinson, Evdoros Demetriou, a music-industry executive, and Richard Hooper, a former BBC man who is now a freelance "media consultant".

The decision on who should win LBC's licence is to be taken by the seven government-appointed members of the Radio Authority. By an amazing coincidence, one of these people is the selfsame Richard Hooper. Indeed, he is widely regarded as the authority's most influential member, because of his experience in the media.

Is it seemly for someone employed by one of the companies bidding for the radio licence to sit on the committee which awards the licence? Apparently so. A spokeswoman for the authority told the *Eye* that although Hooper had declared his interest he was still entitled to take part in the committee's deliberations. If he championed the cause of Guinness Mahon too enthusiastically, it would be up to the authority's other members to decide whether or not they should disregard his opinions.

Another man who has recently been signed up by Guinness Mahon is John Whitney. Until four years ago he was chairman of the Independent Broadcasting Authority — the Radio Authority's predecessor. No doubt this, too, will not influence the authority's decision.


CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
" I'VE SAID, TULLY, THAT THE CLIMATE OF FEAR AND LOW MORALE AT THE BBC IS ONLY TRANSITORY"
Staff Question-naire
"WHY?"
THE ROVER'S RETURN
IBAR
" BECAUSE I'M SACKING EVERYBODY!"
IBAR
PUB MENU CURRY'S OFF
REDUNDANCIES
" Trebles & Stalinism all round!"
Ken Pyne

THE crisis at the Barbican is rattling its md, Baroness O'Cathain.

Low attendences mean the centre must either cut overheads or performances further, and in a memo to staff O'Cathain sentiently concludes: "The *only* solution is to get more people into our paying events."

She has a cunning ploy to make this radical plan work: getting staff to strongarm their chums into using the arts centre no one else can be bothered to visit. Does she ask them to stress the high quality of its artistic events? Not exactly. She seems more interested in ambient temperature.

The baroness gushes hotly: "I am sure all of you have friends who like to go to the cinema; have you told them about our wonderful air-conditioned cinema?... Having endured a sweltering evening in a non-airconditioned theatre last week I realise just how fortunate we are in the Barbican Centre. I fear we don't make enough of the point that we have air-conditioned hall, theatre and cinema."

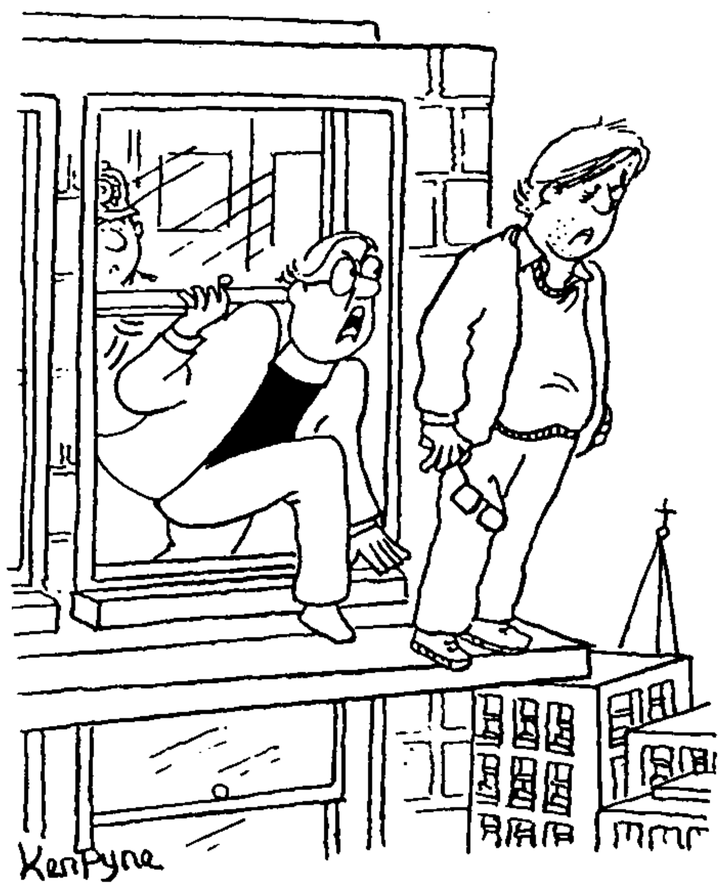
What next? A campaign promoting the quality of the Barbican's many splendid doors, stairs and lavatories?

THE dwindling *Panorama* audience was duped in more ways than two when the programme boasted that its reporter "meets and visits the Pope" for its recent edition on celibacy and sex scandals in the Catholic church.

The clear implication was that *Panorama* had an exclusive interview with the Pope — a rare scoop which *Radio Times* and most newspapers puffed prominently in their preview columns.

The "interview" was no such thing. The film crew simply lined up with the hordes of nuns and tourists outside the Vatican awaiting the Pope's weekly blessing, and when he hove into view the *Panorama* reporter blurted out: "Julian O'Halloran, BBC. Do you have any concerns about the problems of celibacy in the Catholic church?"

The reply was curt — "Bless you, my son" — the Pope presumably recalling that the film was simply a rehash of a story handled much better by *World in Action* last July in *The Sins of the Fathers*. He probably knew that the subject has also been covered extensively by the excellent BBC *Everyman* series.



"You're right. I can't bear Anthony Howard talking about Maastricht any more either"

IT DOESN'T matter that Granada TV's new cost-cutting boss Gerry Robinson knows nothing about television (he is a former caterer, after all), but unfortunately he can't run a canteen, either.

Robinson shut GTV's old canteen at the beginning of July and replaced it with a smaller staff restaurant called "Commercial Break" (*Geddit*?). This offers a more upmarket selection of "high in fibre/low in outlay" jacket potatoes, and is much loved by lifestyle-aware executives eager to flee the company of the high in fat, low in class shopfloor ruffians who make the programmes.

Alas, barely two weeks into its new franchise and Sutcliffe Catering discovered that there was no room at the inn for a hungry *Stars in their Eyes* studio audience. An unseemly row developed, and was only resolved when the old canteen was restored to normal service — black puddin', barm cake etc.

RAILWAY NEWS

THE privatisation of BREL (see *Eyes passim*) was not the only cock-up in the early round of British Rail sell-offs.

When BR was forced to dispose of its Sealink ferry subsidiary — which included the port of Holyhead — it was bought by Bermuda-based Sea Containers who sold it on to the current Scandinavian owner, Stena Line.

Last year Sea Containers introduced a catamaran service on the busy Scotland to Ulster route, competing with a traditional ferry service operated by Sealink. The catamaran is much quicker, allows more crossings each day and, due to a ban on lorries, has a greater appeal for motorists, foot and coach passengers. The new service was an immediate success and devastated the ferry business.

Sea Containers then decided to start a second catamaran service this summer between Holyhead and the southern Irish port of Dun Laoghaire, near Dublin. But Sealink told Sea Containers it couldn't possibly accommodate the catamarans because of a shortage of arrival and departure slots at Holyhead, leaving its ferries with a regrettable monopoly on the popular tourist route.

On 16 July, however, *Sealink* itself started a catamaran service between Holyhead and Dun Laoghaire — identical to the one planned by its rival. Sea Containers is therefore taking Sealink to the European court, seeking a ruling that it has been scuppered through the misuse of a dominant trading position. Sealink meanwhile is busy promoting the service and looking forward to a profitable summer.

Ministers said this sort of thing could never happen when BR was forced to sell Sealink; now similar promises are being made about the future of BR's track, stations and rolling stock. The lucrative private monopoly Sealink will enjoy between Holyhead and Dun Laoghaire this year suggests the department of transport is hopelessly out of touch with commercial reality.

BACK ON dry land, meanwhile, Regional Railways is being squeezed so ruthlessly it cannot even afford to let people know when its trains run.

With the government cutting Regional's puny grant by 22 per cent this year, managers have contrived to save a few thousand valuable pounds by missing out most of the stations on the pocket timetables for the Ipswich to Lowestoft route (the catchment area for which includes part of John MacGregor's constituency).

Seven stations have been dropped to leave just four on the timetable. At the same time, the vital connection times for London and Norwich have been omitted. This means the "timetable" can be squeezed on to one tiny sheet of card, saving the cost of ink, paper and staples.

Meanwhile six stations have been omitted from the timetable leaflets for the Aberystwyth to Shrewsbury route, and for the nearby Cambrian Coast line *no pocket timetables at all* were produced for the summer — the busiest period for this tourismoriented line.

Replying to complaints, Regional's East Anglia district manager Barrie Thomas set out to portray the change as a great improvement for passengers ("easy to understand", "simple information"). But he soon gave up the struggle to cover the government's back and told the truth: "The reasons for the change stem both from research into the way in which people actually find out about their proposed journey and, to be quite frank, the need to reduce our costs. You may be aware that our finances have been severely curtailed this year and quite honestly unless we had reduced expenditure on such things as timetables, basic services — which I have sought to maintain — would have to be reduced."

This marks another triumph for the road lobby: if people don't know when the trains run, or whether they connect, they will have to go by road instead. It is unlikely that full timetables will be restored for winter, the quieter season, so this small alteration will help the inexorable spiral of decline on rural railways.

NOTICE BORES

A new column celebrating theatre critics

SUNSET BOULEVARD
(Adelphi)

"... Kevin Anderson... is wonderfully cast..."
Michael Coveney, Observer

"... an absolute dud of a performance from Kevin Anderson."
Charles Spencer, Daily Telegraph

—o—

"... Kevin Anderson... has the right air of cynical petulance..."
Maureen Paton, Daily Express

"Kevin Anderson... too lacking in cynicism..."
John Gross, Sunday Telegraph

—o—

"A moody, amoral charmer..."
Jack Tinker, Daily Mail

"... the sex appeal of a walnut."
Sabine Durrant, Independent on Sunday

Coming soon: GREASE

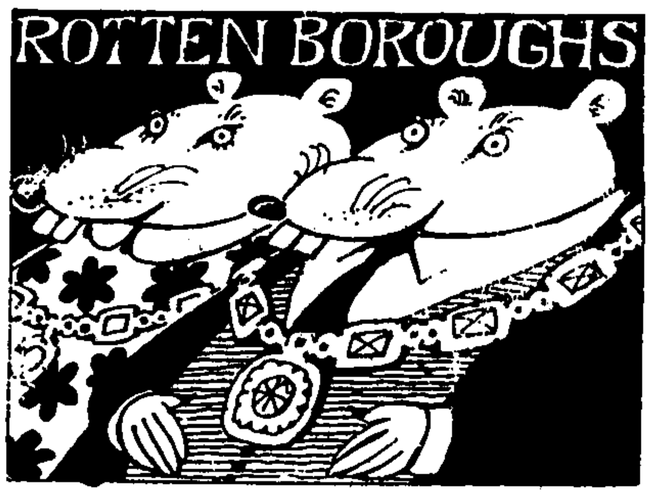
JUST FANCY THAT

HOME: A smiling Di yesterday

Daily Mirror 15.7.93

Diana's sad return

Daily Express 15.7.93



ENFIELD

ENFIELD Labour party has become involved in a curious commercial sideline — manufacturing the illegal drug ecstasy.

Inspector Knacker of Enfield drug squad swooped recently on a disused Ponders End clothing factory, The Barn Hall, and uncovered "Britain's most sophisticated ecstasy factory" — 200,000 tabs of 'E' worth £15 million.

The Barn Hall building is owned by the local Labour party under its property wing, River Front Properties, which also owns three nearby garages. The party knew nothing, of course, of the dodgy activities it was inadvertently sponsoring inside.

Ever sensitive to controversy, River Front submitted a planning application to the Tory-run council, seeking change of use at the Barn Hall from light industrial (*sic*) to business and general industry. The application was deferred when the planning meeting at which the application was discussed ended in chaos, with Tory councillors barely able to keep a straight face over Labour's drug problem.

LAMBETH

IS IT ANY wonder Labour-run Lambeth is Britain's most indebted council? Its finance officers can't even count.

Already unable to explain the whereabouts of £20 million of public money, the council recently announced that its charge-payers owe £173 million in unpaid rents and poll tax.

It now turns out they actually owe £218 million (about two-thirds of the council's annual budget). So why the £45 million increase? The council suddenly remembered that it is paying £10,000 a day interest on its poll tax debt, which accounts for about one-third (some £70 million) of its total arrears.

Thanks to Lambeth's brilliant Stuff The Poll Tax campaign, the council's creditors — arch symbols of the capitalist state — are £10,000 a day better off!

CYNON VALLEY

WHY is Labour-controlled Cynon Valley, deep in the valleys, refusing Tory government money to build new houses?

Three years ago the council did a deal with the Welsh office quango Housing for Wales, a Cambrian version of the Housing Corporation, to build 120 new houses in Cynon Valley, which is often cited as having the UK's worst housing problems.

Normally Labour councils are quick to quibble with the Tories for withholding public money from socially useful projects, yet Cynon Valley has withdrawn from the 120-homes-a-year deal to demand that only 30 new houses be built over each of the next 10 years.

The Welsh office, which is constantly pestered for money from other local authorities, is too dumbfounded to object, but why is Cynon Valley so shy of ransacking the public purse?

The new houses are being built through the Cynon Taf Housing Association, a dastardly private sector organisation which presumably deserves only contempt in socialism's heartland. Either that, or housing chief Margaret Evans is pursuing a personal vendetta against the housing association which sacked her from its management committee after she had failed to attend a single meeting in two years.

BIRMINGHAM

THOSE irrepressible young pranksters at Birmingham's infamous St John's children's home have been up to their merry japes again.

This time a gang of three teenagers stole the master keys to the whole place and decided to spring the eight young criminals locked in the secure unit including two rapists, two arsonists and a couple of compulsive car thieves — all very violent.

Senior social worker Kevin Cameron had left the keys in an unlocked drawer in a room used by the young yobs. The gang got past the security cameras because no one was watching the screens and broke open two of the three sets of doors before a worker chanced to spot them and summoned help.

Social services chairwoman, the unpleasant Eve Brook, has tried to pass the attempted release of the West Midlands' most dangerous young criminals as "just a prank". Perhaps she might like to explain why Cameron now faces a disciplinary tribunal and the blundering general manager of child care, Paul Sutton, faces an inquiry by the social services inspectorate.

BIRMINGHAM's drug-ridden Hummingbird nightclub looks set to bite the dust — despite the efforts of the city's Labour leaders to preserve the mecca of Midlands narcotics dealers.

The Hummingbird was founded 10 years ago as a venue for black music, backed by huge grants from the Labour-controlled and now defunct West Midlands county council.

It quickly became a notorious venue for dealing in all kinds of narcotics — to the point where the police spent thousands of pounds in legal actions to have its drinks and entertainments licences revoked. But repeated pleas to Labour city councillors fell on deaf ears — even though the club's holding company, Uniqueaction, owes the city £126,000 in business rates arrears and despite warnings from environmental health officers of dozens of safety hazards.

Labour leader Sir "Dick" Knowles and leader-in-waiting, Coun Albert Bore, even continued their support after a man died at a Hummingbird rave in March from an overdose of Ecstasy, and again when a client was shot and injured outside the club over a drugs deal last month. That latter rave was one of dozens of lucrative events at the club which regularly pull in capacity audiences but which strangely never seem to make any money to pay off debts.

Now the Hummingbird's owners, Pearl Assurance, have tired of trying to collect the £100,000 they are owed in rent and have sent in the bailiffs. The move came despite death threats phoned to Pearl's land agents, Erdman Lewis, after they won a county court possession order. It was also despite a strange letter to Pearl from a very senior Labour councillor threatening that if they closed the club they would never get planning permission for any project in the city again.

What can possibly explain the strange support of Sir "Dick" Knowles *et al* for such a dive? It cannot possibly be anything to do with the fact that Hummingbird boss Lloyd Blake has been a senior member of Ladywood Labour party, where Bore is a councillor and his many friends hold the balance of power?

MURKEYSIDE

NEWS that five city councillors who went to a free showing of *Jurassic Park* were also *paid* £18 each "attendance allowance" was greeted with more mirth than outrage by Liverpool taxpayers.

With a council deficit of more than £19 million, nobody bothers if a few quid is wasted when the licensing subcommittee sets itself up as rival to the British Board of Film Classification.

Someone sadly missing from the freebie was ex-deputy of the licensing committee Kevin Ratcliffe — a victim of predatory politics, Liverpool-style. Ratcliffe had been accused of soliciting a £4,000 bribe from Tory council "leader" Steve Fitzsimmons in exchange for an extension of licensing hours at Plummers wine bar, which Fitzsimmons managed.

Merseyside police taped a phone conversation between Fitzsimmons and Ratcliffe and wired Fitzsimmons to record an illicit "meet" with one of Ratcliffe's cronies in a restaurant at which £2,000 changed hands. As befits corruption investigations on Murkeyside, police evidence failed to impress the jury when it came to court last October and the judge ordered a retrial.

The CPS, perhaps mindful of its lack of success in pursuing larger fry, decided in July to drop a second trial against Ratcliffe, claiming he had suffered enough. Ratcliffe has meanwhile retired from local politics, but Fitzsimmons, whose behaviour Philadelphia lawyers would term "entrapment", still presides over the token Tory group — himself and one other.

Meanwhile Lib Dem leader Mike Storey has circulated an article from *Eye* 823 which claimed that certain of his colleagues were out to get him. An attached note tells his loyal followers that "If anybody has a copy of the 'dossier' I'd love to see it." Too late — the rights have been sold to Steven Spielberg.

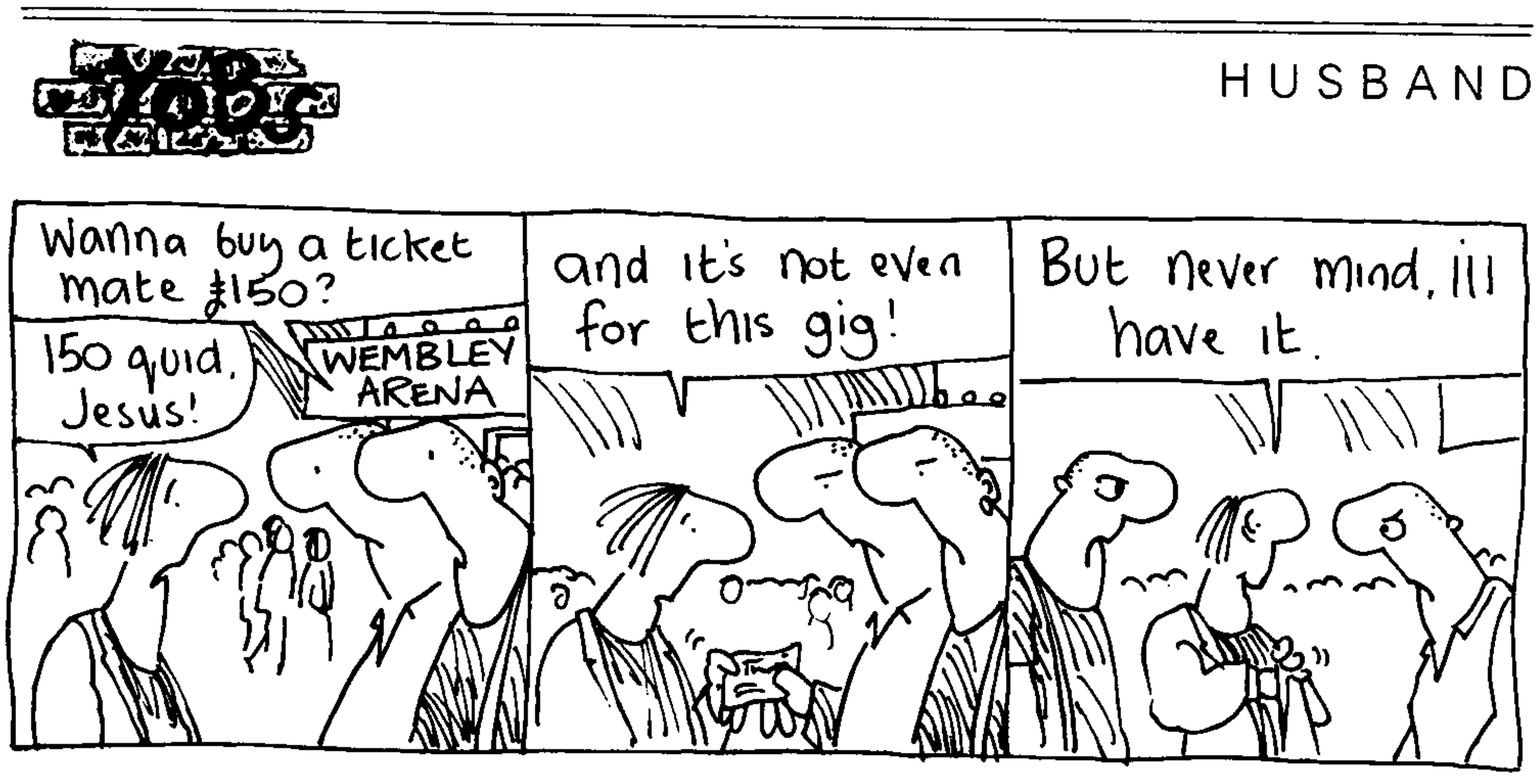
ISLINGTON

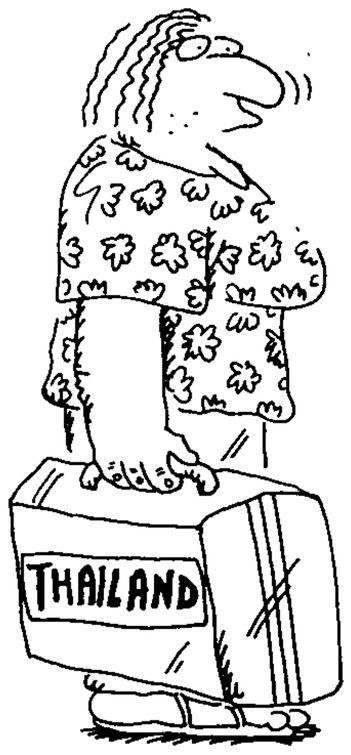
COUN Phil Kelly, the education chair in Islington, north London, is about to find out how hard it is in local government wearing two hats.

Plans to run the Channel tunnel rail link through the borough have caused outrage among voters. Unlike Tory supporters in the Kent shires, the residents in Labour-controlled Islington will not apparently qualify for landscaped tunnels.

So great is the concern that the council has organised two public meetings for residents to make their views known. But Kelly might be well advised to stay away in case someone asks for his opinion.

If he does not go along with popular anger, he is unlikely to endear himself to his electorate. If he does, his employer is going to be more than a little upset. Kelly is a publicity officer for Union Railways, the outfit set up by BritRail to, er, build and operate the Channel link.





"Hi, mummy, I'm home"

Kerber

JUSTICE

FOLLOWING John Major's Thai triumph in securing the release and return to Britain of two self-confessed drug smugglers, one of whom has already signed a lucrative Hollywood movie deal, more prisoner "traffic" can be expected — but in the opposite direction.

Recent parliamentary moves to push through an extradition treaty with India highlight what is expected to be the first of a number of deportations under the draconian provisions of the 1971 immigration act. Human rights activists point out that we don't need the death penalty in Britain when it is available courtesy of repressive friendly regimes abroad.

Delhi wants the special new extradition treaty with Britain to bypass United Nations safeguards that are built into the current Commonwealth extradition treaty. Britain, keen to win more than its share of the lucrative trade and financial deals emerging in the liberalised Indian market, is happy to oblige.

The new treaty should avoid the sort of embarrassment even the home office has felt over the Karamjit Singh Chahal case. The Sikh activist has been in jail for three years, without charge or evidence against him, and is almost certain to be deported to India later this year — despite 20 years of law-abiding residency in this country and responsibility for a family who carry British passports.

Under the "guilty until proved innocent" provisions of the immigration act, the British government can detain indefinitely without trial and deport without charge or evidence. Human rights campaigners are convinced Chahal's sole crime has been to embarrass the Indian government — publicising Indian human rights abuses in the Punjab. Repatriating him seems to be the best way to shut him up and deny him the international stage which Amnesty International and others have used to denounce an increase in killings, disappearances and torture in the Punjab.

Chahal is almost certainly being deported to more extrajudicial detention and possibly torture and death in India. For while the evidence against him is non-existent, proof that he was severely tortured during his previous visit to India in 1984 is overwhelming, according to medical experts in London. "I was particularly struck by scars running down both shins from knee to ankle," said Dr Duncan Forrest, whose report has been ignored by the home office.

Last minute pleas on Chahal's behalf are likely to fail, creating the dangerous precedent of outspoken opponents of regimes friendly to Britain being repatriated without charge to torture or death. As Max Maddon MP noted earlier this year: "It may not be that he will be killed instantly, but I am sure that at some date in the not too distant future there will be a little paragraph appearing in British papers noting that Mr Chahal has been shot or met with an accident."

● WILL the prime minister also intercede to help Susan Hagan and Sally Anne Croft, the two British former Bhagwan followers who are in the high court fighting extradition to the United States — and almost certain long prison sentences for something they didn't do? Given our special pet poodle relationship with the US, no one should hold his or her breath.

Bankers

DEFENCE

BANKS are being asked what information they keep on customers' politics and religions by the office of data protection following revelations of the big brother behaviour of the National Westminster.

The chairman of the Nat West is Lord Alexander, QC. Wearing his other hat, he serves as chairman of Justice — just the sort of organisation, one might think, to investigate such unsavoury goings-on. Not so. A spokesman said: "Perhaps you should try Liberty. Our main area of activity is miscarriages of justice."

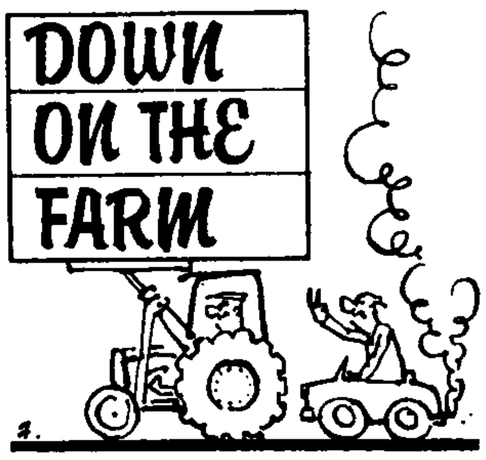
Lord Alexander is also the man responsible for the appointment at Mirror Group Newspapers of chief David Montgomery — he of the enlightened management style. (Nat West was the lead bank among the Maxwell creditors who appointed Montgomery.)

A RECENT edition of the *Daily Torygraph* carried a story about the proposed sale of a former cold war bunker at Sopley, Hampshire.

Originally built as an RAF radar site, it was abandoned in the 1960s but revived in the early 1980s when army headquarters at Wilton selected it for use in war under the codename "Kensington".

The bunker is to be auctioned through Allsop & Co on behalf of the ministry of defence agent; but are the auctioneers, who advertised the bunker's attractions in the *Torygraph* article, telling potential purchasers the whole story?

When the army started converting it, builders found that it was extensively lagged with asbestos. The estimated cost of removing the asbestos was so high the army withdrew and the site reverted to its previous disused status. No doubt the auctioneers will ensure that bidders are fully informed of this major health hazard.



with 'New Muckspreader'

WHEN the scourge of Aujesky's disease hit Britain's pigs a few years back, producers raised £27 million to compensate those who had lost their animals in the drive to stamp out the disease.

By 1991, the campaign had been so successful that Britain was declared officially free of the disease — and £780,000 was left in the pig disease eradication fund's kitty.

Now, however, the European Community (EC) has ruled that for Britain to keep out potentially infected imports, continuous monitoring must be carried out to prove there has been no recurrence. This has presented MAFF with an unwelcome bill of nearly £148,000 a year. What better way to recover the money, it has concluded under treasury pressure, than to charge it to the disease eradication fund?

The move, described by pig men as complete theft, has been enthusiastically endorsed by butter mountain Nicholas Soames.

The pig farmers now hope that the new, still whiter than white agriculture minister Gillian Shepherd will allow them to keep their own money. If she does the decent thing, she has the problem of how to save Fatty from losing face. While other tricky decisions await her — such as what to do about those farmers whose health has been ruined by nerve-gas-type sheep dip — it is hard to think of anything bigger than Soames sitting in her in-tray.

ABATTOIR owners suffering in the near-collapse of the meat market will be comforted to learn that the meat and livestock commission (MLC) has been doing quite well, thank you, insulated from commercial reality by its compulsory levy on the meat industry.

According to its report for the year ending 31 March, despite shedding 5 percent of its workers (mainly technical and support staff, down from 898 to 853) overall staff costs have risen by 4 per cent to £19.1 million.

Average salaries have increased 9.8 per cent, more than double the rate of inflation, with a 64 percent increase in the number of staff earning more than £30,000. Modestly, the chief executive has been awarded a 27 per cent increase bringing him to a comfortable £90,376 — a bit better than the penury he suffered in 1991 on just £74,894.

His £16,000 increase is more than most people in the meat industry earn. When it comes to fatstock, some levy payers wonder if the term applies to the animals — or to the MLC.

EEC FARM commissioner René Steichen, known to friends as Strychnine, tells farmers that his experts have assured him that set-aside is working. But experts for the farm trade federation COCERAL, backed by a US department of agriculture report, are not so sure.

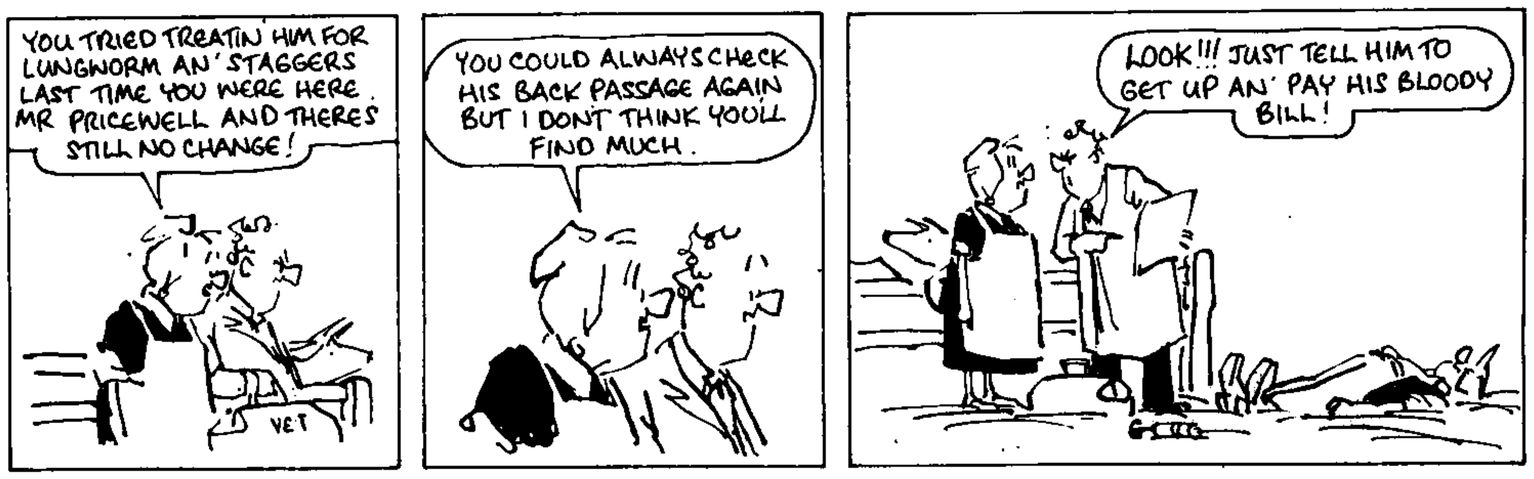
They say the policy of taking 15 per cent of arable land out of production to reduce the grain surplus will reduce this year's harvest by just 1 per cent. Next year, thanks to yield increases, production is likely to rise 1 per cent higher than before set-aside came in.

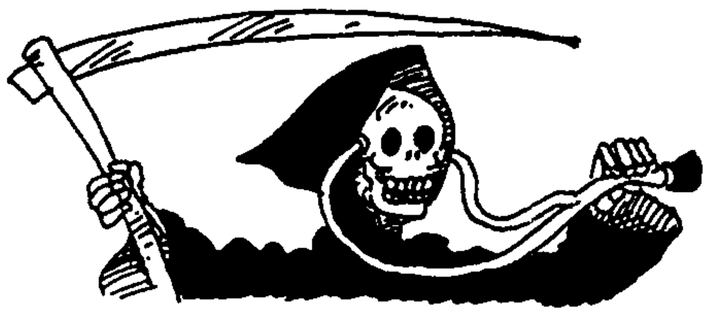
Meanwhile the slaughter of the innocents continues, brought about by MAFF's demand for premature weed control or "topping". Last week, deep in Liam Fox country (*Eye* 823), a south-facing set-aside field had produced some wonderful cover. But, in accordance with the rules, the farmer "topped" the field before 1 July. In doing so he inadvertently "topped" three young deer sheltering in an area where the sighting of deer is a talking point.

But perhaps the slaughter is worth it. With 16,000 square miles of prime farming land under water in the Mississippi and Missouri basins, there will be little US spare grain capacity next year. With the likelihood of a global cereals shortfall, think what might have happened if Strychnine's policy had worked...

Old Macdonald

ALBERT


YOU TRIED TREATIN HIM FOR LUNGWORM AN' STAGGERS LAST TIME YOU WERE HERE MR PRICEWELL AND THERES STILL NO CHANGE!
VET
YOU COULD ALWAYS CHECK HIS BACK PASSAGE AGAIN BUT I DONT THINK YOULL FIND MUCH.
LOOK!!! JUST TELL HIM TO GET UP AN' PAY HIS BLOODY BILL!



DOING THE ROUNDS

IN OCTOBER 1992, a 34-year-old Rotherham man had a heart attack. After two weeks in hospital, he was referred to Dr M.W. Baig at Doncaster Royal Infirmary who saw him on 5 January 1993, decided he needed an urgent angiogram and advised him to be ready "immediately". At the end of February, Dr Baig's secretary told the man he would have to wait a little longer, because budget cuts had reduced operating sessions to one a fortnight.

In March, Dr Baig wrote saying his waiting list was still too long and that Dr Bowes at **Sheffield Northern general hospital** would take over his care and contact him soon. On 25 May, the man had not heard anything and decided to contact Dr Bowes' department. He was told that he wasn't on Dr Bowes' list at all, but was on a limbo list of Dr Baig's with another 30 cardiac hopefuls.

On 24 June, he received a letter from Dr Bowes saying he was now on his waiting list, which currently stands at six months. If the angiography indicated the need for urgent heart surgery, the waiting list for this is around 18 months. It is to be hoped that Michael Heseltine, who had a heart attack recently, is not experiencing similar difficulties.

● THE widespread closure of secure psychiatric hospitals has resulted in patients with severe mental illness being treated in insecure district general hospitals. Earlier this month, a woman died after climbing on to the balcony and jumping from the second floor of **Croydon's Mayday hospital.** As a hospital spokesman said: "She was not considered a high suicide risk." Meanwhile, managers at the **Princess of Wales hospital** in **Bridgend** are considering hiring rooms at the nearby motorway service station at Sarn to put up post-operative eye patients. The motel's fee of £30 a night is £90 cheaper than the hospital — but money might have to be spent on retraining chambermaids to deal with ophthalmic emergencies.

● THE "surprise" resignation of **Merseyside's** ambulance boss Owen Disley last month may have had something to do with the service's £750,000 debt. Disley spearheaded the controversial merger of the **Cheshire** and **Merseyside** services and was rewarded with the post of chief executive of the new trust. After managerial deductions, the trust was unable to pay for spare parts for its 10-year-old vehicles or for staff to cover the duties of colleagues on leave, leaving some areas without ambulance cover at all.

However, money was found to refurbish the trust's headquarters and £250,000 was put towards a new computerised radio communications system. This has proved rather a disappointment, hardly surprising as it was designed for a rural service and not the massive volume of emergency calls in the Y region. Alan Kennedy, one of the officers instrumental in the choice of the radio equipment, left the Y service for a new position in the **London ambulance service**, where he advised on the selection of its ill-fated radio equipment.

● **LLANDOUGH hospital NHS trust** in **south Wales** has an excellent child leukaemia unit which relies heavily on the charity LATCH to stay open. The trust prefers to spend its money on advertising for a marketing intelligence officer to "develop marketing strategy, monitor trends in purchasing patterns and undertake environmental and competitive analysis".

● THE financial crisis at **Kendal's Westmorland general hospital trust** (*Eyes passim*) has triggered the closure of nearby **Helme Chase maternity hospital** and the loss of 20 support service jobs to save £200,000 a year. The trust's cash problems partly stem from the fact that its principal purchaser, **South Cumbria health authority**, is also broke.

● THE impecunious **Central Middlesex NHS hospital trust** can no longer afford hot dinners for patients, and now serves soup, sandwiches and salads only to save £40,000 a year. The trust, which the managers claim is "patient centred", was also forced to stop elective surgery from December to April.

● NO ONE WAS more confident of the Tories' enthusiasm for the national health service than the Tony Newton MP when he attended the opening of the **Duchess of York children's hospital** in south Manchester on 29 October 1987.

After Fergie uttered the standard inanities, Newton said there could be no clearer proof of the

government's caring policies than this spanking new hospital which would care for the children of Manchester for years to come.

Not that many years, actually. Six years later the hospital is to close. And coupled with the closure of **Booth Hall children's hospital** (*Eye* 813), Manchester's paediatric services are being halved. Even before the closure, an 11-year-old boy died in transit to Preston because all of Manchester's 11 paediatric intensive care beds were occupied. The "transfer" of services to the **Royal Manchester children's hospital** could mean that the number of intensive care beds will be further reduced to five.

● MRS BOTTOMLEY has ordered **Grimsby health NHS trust hospital** to reemploy a doctor who was unfairly dismissed. In 1991, Dr Sanjay Mukherjee was told his post of senior clinical medical officer was no longer needed by **Grimsby health authority**, who promptly readvertised for an almost identical post. An industrial tribunal in 1992 ruled that Dr Mukherjee had not been given the chance to consult properly with the BMA prior to his redundancy notice, and he was given leave to appeal to the secretary of state.

M.D.

WATER NEWS

IAN BYATT, director of the water regulator Ofwat, has come sadly to the conclusion that the main argument in favour of water privatisation — that only the stock exchange could raise the vast sums needed to clean up our water — is not on.

The government said that while it could not find the necessary billions, the City was always able to produce money for investment. But Byatt, who used to be a high flyer in the monetarist treasury, now concludes that this won't work and he has suggested that the customer must pay extra or, as he would prefer, that we should settle for lower standards in the quality of the water we drink and the amount of sewage we unload on the beaches.

He announced as much in *Paying for Quality*, another shot in the leaflet war between himself,

OFWAT

the national rivers authority (NRA), which challenges his view and says the estimates are exaggerated, and environmentalists who say polluters (industry) should pay.

Meanwhile the private water company monopolies continue to benefit from a disguised subsidy from the public: huge loans at very low interest from an organisation that is simply the government in disguise — the European Investment Bank.

EIB is backed 100 percent by the governments of the European Community. Its governors are the finance ministers of the 12 (ie Kenneth Clarke, etc), and its directors are civil servants: for Britain, Huw P. Evans, deputy secretary in the treasury; and Roy Williams, deputy secretary at the DTI.

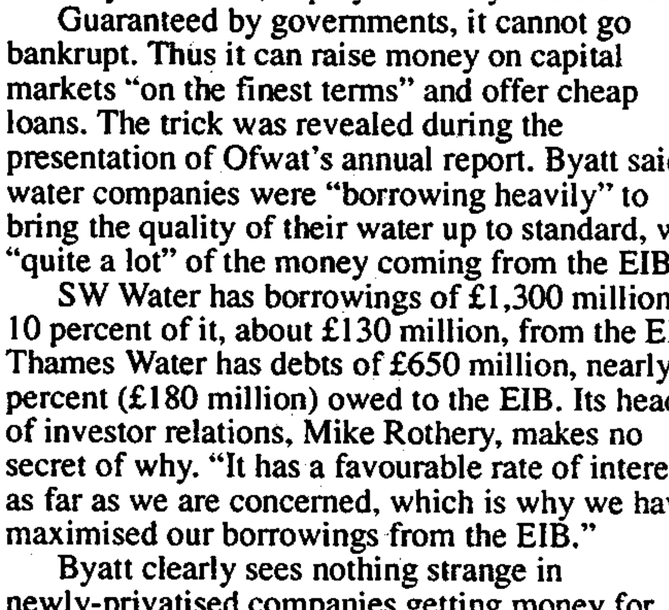
Guaranteed by governments, it cannot go bankrupt. Thus it can raise money on capital markets "on the finest terms" and offer cheap loans. The trick was revealed during the presentation of Ofwat's annual report. Byatt said water companies were "borrowing heavily" to bring the quality of their water up to standard, with "quite a lot" of the money coming from the EIB.

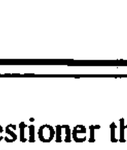
SW Water has borrowings of £1,300 million, 10 percent of it, about £130 million, from the EIB. Thames Water has debts of £650 million, nearly 30 percent (£180 million) owed to the EIB. Its head of investor relations, Mike Rothery, makes no secret of why. "It has a favourable rate of interest as far as we are concerned, which is why we have maximised our borrowings from the EIB."

Byatt clearly sees nothing strange in newly-privatised companies getting money for capital expenditure from the public sector — ie cheap money from government, or a state subsidy. He agreed with a questioner that a big justification for privatisation had been that only the stock market could provide the sums to bring Britain's crumbling sewers, polluted drinking water and dirty beaches up to EC standards, yet now the talk was of higher water charges to consumers to finance the improvements.

He replied smoothly: "The theory was that the public sector borrowing requirement could not afford the money and therefore it had to be raised on the stock exchange. But someone has to have a reward in the form of interest or dividend and that stream of returns has to come from the customers."

So, despite handouts from Mr Clarke and the EIB, everyone can expect to pay more for water and sewerage, while water companies anticipate higher wages for top staff and higher dividends for shareholders.





BOSSES at Yorkshire Water are as popular with their employees as they are with customers.

Workers have just rejected a 1.6 percent pay offer after learning that their chairman, Sir Gordon Jones, had been given a 9.1 percent increase, taking his salary to £156,000 a year for his part-time post.

Now customers have also had their say. In a public consultation exercise involving more than 3,000 water users, respondents have, not surprisingly, opted to keep prices to a minimum. Yorkshire Water promptly warned them that the minimum would be a 40 percent increase in bills by the end of the decade — and a drop in the standard of service. Privatisation — *don'tcha just love it?*

Letters

General knowledge

Sir,

The Public Relations Department of the Embassy of the Union of Myanmar has just been handed a copy of PRIVATE EYE *magazine, No. 824, dated 16 July '93.*

On behalf of the Embassy, permit me to correct your misinformed correspondent in your "Letter from Rangoon". The Union of Myanmar has been stymied by misconceptions abroad and this wealth of misinformation must be corrected. We have made a great movement ahead in culture and morals and our biggest task is to build a united Myanmar nation.

Myanmar has no problems of human rights. The people who are in jail, we sympathize with them, but they have been jailed for unlawful acts.

Regarding the so-called Nobel Aung San Suu Kyi, she is free to leave Myanmar anytime she wishes. There can be no dialogue between Aung San Suu Kyi and the military, because the military must follow its own agenda.

I hope this explains the current situation in Myanmar.

Yours sincerely,
GENERAL TUN KYI,

Public Relations Officer, Embassy of the Union of Myanmar, London W1.

Ne Win situation

Sir,

In your letter from Rangoon in issue 824 you incorrectly state that the reason for the ridiculous denominations of currency in Burma (Myanmar) are due to General Ne Win's numerologist telling him that nine was his lucky number.

The real reason for the denominations of notes in these ridiculous amounts (which also include notes of 35 and 15 Kyat which are not divisible by 9) is less exotic but equally bizarre. Back in 1987 Ne Win devised an astonishingly simple counter inflationary economic dodge which was simply to declare all 100 Kyat notes invalid. Thus the richer Burmese who kept their savings in these notes had them summarily declared worthless. So pleased was he with this move that he did it again with the 50 Kyat notes.

The upshot was that it was impossible to resurrect the old denominations, hence when it was eventually necessary to print new notes some other denominations had to be found which led to these odd amounts being used.

Yours faithfully,
NICK KEMP,

London SE26.

Care full

Sir,

*You report (*EYE *824) that the cancer caseload at N Middlesex hospital may be doubled and ask who will look after these patients. The answer is clear: they will be cared for by "cancer doctors", ie by clinical oncologists, fellows of this college trained in the treatment of cancer by radio-, chemo- and immunotherapy, and not by the specialties that may be about to be cut at the hospital.*

The caseload can only increase if extra oncologists are appointed or transferred from elsewhere, as the present staff are already fully occupied. The proposal to double the size of the department reflects both the high standard of care they provide and the fact that the hospital is more accessible to patients than other centres which will be closed.

Yours truly,
C.J. SQUIRE,

Clinical audit adviser, The Royal College of Radiologists, London W1.

Cigar puff

Sir,

Please help me to understand your little story about me, the adorable Ms Seagrove and the ever-suave Andrew Neil. It reported that lovely Andrew was so distressed by his critic's poor review of PRESENT LAUGHTER *(featuring Ms S) that out of loyalty to Mr Perfection (me) he ordered a special puff in his Style Section to compensate.*

But Jon Peters' review was a rave for Ms Seagrove! Could anyone wish for more? Ned Sherrin's article in Style was a history of the play over many years. Even though darling Ned hadn't seen it, he suspected the leading player, Mr Conti, found the role "alien" to him, and there was a very rude reference to me!

How can that justify your conclusion that "With friends like Brillo, who needs real theatre critics?" I think you should send Ms Seagrove a bunch of flowers and some Krug. No, sod it, don't bother, just send me some cigars.

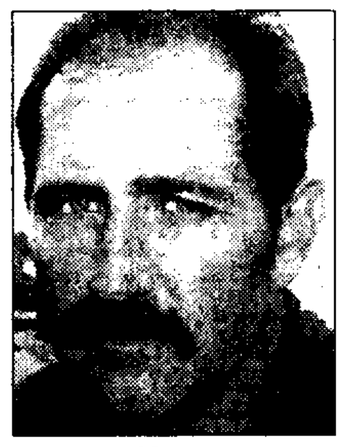
Wishing you all continued prosperity.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL WINNER,

Scimitar Films Ltd, London W1.

Lookalike

Gooch



Horn

Sir,

I notice a resemblance between Tom Horn, famed wild west gunslinger who plaited the rope used to hang him, and Graham Gooch, the beleaguered England cricket captain.

They reckon that Horn was hung for a crime he did not commit.

I think Ted Dexter should be told.

Yours sincerely,
STEPHEN NATION-TELLERY,

Twickenham.

Extremely interesting

Sir,

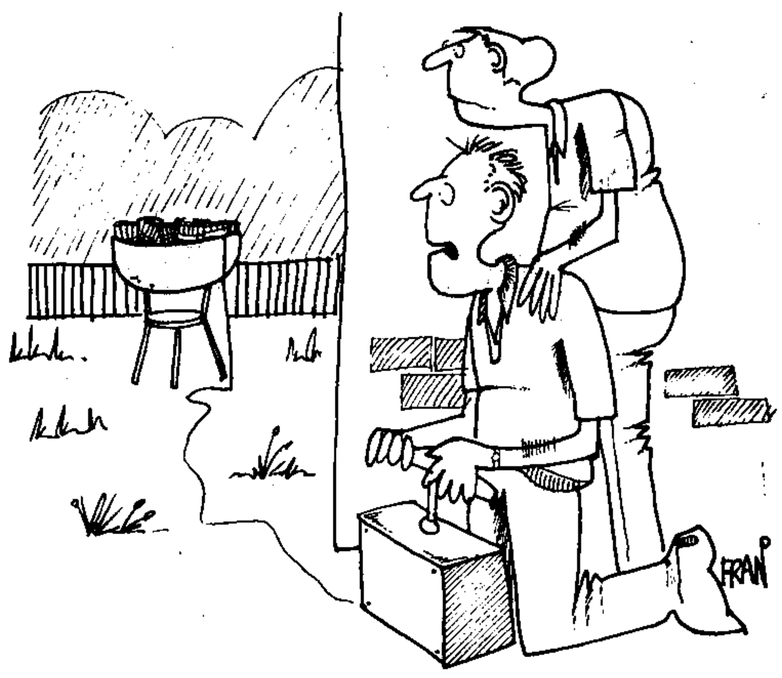
Your Bankers correspondent is a little out of date with NatWest bank's current overdraft charges. On 1 June they went up from the £36 per quarter as stated in your article on page 9 of EYE *824 to an incredible £3.50* PER DAY. *This is equivalent to some £319 per quarter, or a massive 887 percent increase.*

Together with the interest claimed for the overdraft, this has resulted in my case of bank charges on my modest personal account in excess of £136 for one month. Now what was TSB's address?

Yours,
COLIN PATRICK,

Henley on Thames, Oxon.

SERIAL KILLERS ANONYMOUS



"I find getting the barbecue lit is the difficult bit"

Trident tested

Sir,

What's so odd about an American contractor refitting Trident submarines at Devonport? We test the war-heads, when allowed, in that part of England called the Nevada desert; the Trident design is American; and in the matter of its missiles the FINANCIAL TIMES *says "The UK is paying their full purchase price but the conditions of the deal, under which they will be serviced in and replaced by the US, are a leasing arrangement."*

Were we to wish to give the order to fire Trident or Polaris, we'd have to use the US satellite system, or British carrier pigeons.

God save the special relationship.

Yours sincerely,
MATTHEW PLESCH,

Chorlton, Manchester.

Cross words

Sir,

While I fully applaud M.D.'s concern for the way this government is slowly destroying the NHS, the item about Mid-Staffordshire health authority in EYE *824 leads me to doubt his/her humanity. Transsexualism is a serious medical condition which can only be treated by gender re-assignment surgery. Without this treatment, which has been provided by the NHS for many years, it is impossible for transsexuals to lead normal lives, still less to enjoy an intimate relationship. The implication of M.D.'s story, that this operation should not be performed by the NHS denies the most basic of human rights to transsexuals.*

Yours sincerely,
MICHELLE APPLETON,

London SE10.

LUVVIES

"Acting to me is like police work — tedious yet terrifying."

MERYL STREEP
The Sun

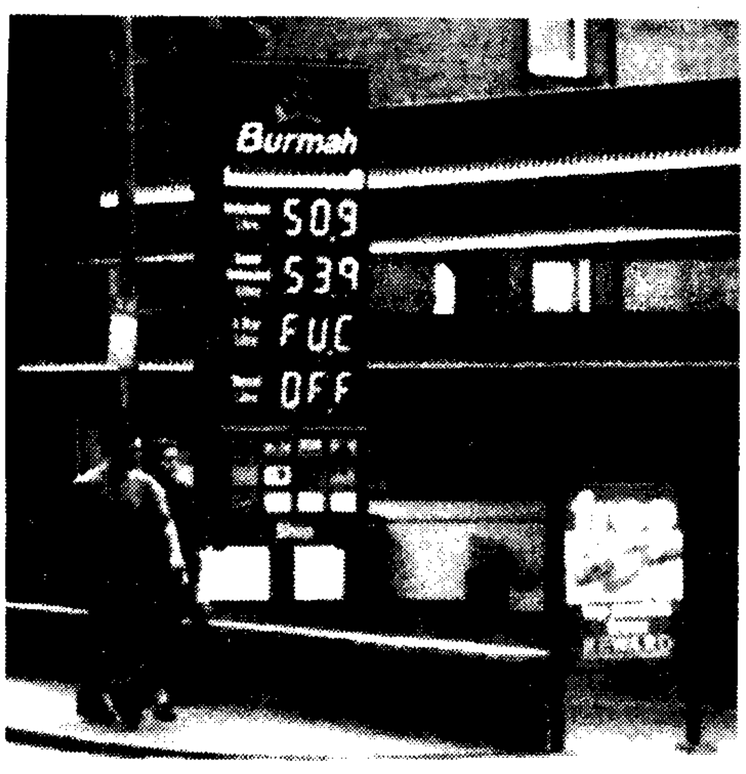
"I'm afraid I started navel-gazing," he says. "I started thinking things like 'There's 365 days in the year, but for 275 of those days I'm saying someone else's words. And they're bad words. And I only get to say my own words for 90 days." So he re-worked his dialogue, changing lines like: "This is a great place, Doug, this is like your other place" to "Nice digs, Doug, you dog, I dig 'em."

JOHNNY DEPP
Independent Magazine

Submitted by Steve Vallance, Josephine Sproates.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

I-SPY



Submitted by Allan Gilmour. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Rocky's role

Sir,

An article in "Street of Shame" (823) alleges that (1) I am "claiming the credit for hoaxes that aren't his" and (2) "Ryan rang SUN *news editor Jamie Pyatt to admit that he hadn't been the source of the original story at all."*

Both the aforementioned allegations are completely untrue and without any foundation in fact. Anyway the GUARDIAN *knows that what you have stated is false because I rang the newspaper (letting them know what I was up to) in advance to my "Palace Gays story" appearing in the* SUN.

Further, there were four people (of good character) present while I was "planting" my royal story in the SUN, *one gentleman recording my performance for posterity. True to my "modus operandi", I rang the* SUN *and told them to read the* GUARDIAN *Diary; just to let them know that they had been "screwed" by Rocky Ryan yet again.*

I have never ever claimed credit for "hoaxes" that were not my inventions, although I am aware that certain people have called "news-desks" claiming to be me.

Yours faithfully,
ROCKY RYAN,

London NW10.

Unabashed

Sir,

Paul Foot caused no surprises (824) when half his "Footnotes" was given over to Brit bashing/Prot bashing with regards to the 1974 Dublin bombings. I eagerly await his spending as much space on Dublin-bashing with respect to their safe-haven policy for IRA terrorists, and dodgy judicial rulings, not to mention the sinister role of the Dublin government in setting up the Provisionals (as described in a TV documentary last year).

Yours sincerely,
ANTHONY DAVID JONES MA,

Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs.

Pay & dismay

Sir,

Your otherwise admirable feature on the lunacies currently taking place in the health service is marred by your criticisms of those hospitals that introduce parking charges. Most staff and visitors to hospitals, at least in cities, use public transport; there is no reason why nearly all should not do so. Patients who cannot use public transport should have the use of an ambulance.

Reducing private car use is by a very long way the most important environmental issue. Other causes espoused by the green movement, such as recycling raw materials, opposition to nuclear energy, and blanket condemnation of agricultural chemicals, are either of minor importance, or misguided in relation to their own declared objectives.

Yours faithfully,
F. KNOX,

Trade and Tariffs Research, London SW4.

Non-U

Sir,

The problems experienced by Liverpool Polytechnic in renaming itself (Murkeyside, 16 July) are as naught compared to those of Newcastle Polytechnic which was nearly called the City University of Newcastle-on-Tyne, but was redeemed at the last minute when someone realised what the initials spelt.

Yours faithfully,
BEVERLEY A. CROSS,

Bromborough, Wirral.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Martina's done extremely well here to put Jana in the extremely difficult position of having to serve for the match."
ANN JONES, BBC2
(Tony Kench)

"He [Courier] is basically playing goalie to Martin's Muhammed Ali."
CHRISTINE JANES, Radio 5
(Patrick Smith)

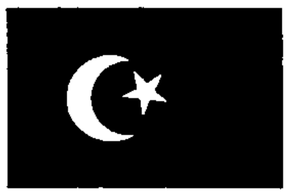
Fred Perry: *It's all a question of did he [Agassi] or didn't he practise?*
Commentator: *"And I think the answer is did he?"*
Radio 5
(Mike Gavin)

"Her best forehand is on her backhand side."
VIRGINIA WADE, BBC2
(J.E. Meadows)

"Edberg... he moves from side to side laterally."
JOHN BARRETT, BBC1
(Jim Billsborough)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



Letter from Ankara

from Our Own Correspondent

TANSU CILLER is Turkey's first woman prime minister and we are proud of her. She brings the promise of change to a stale political scene.

Her good looks, huge wealth and relative youth (she is 47) certainly helped in the leadership contest when the True Path Party voted overwhelmingly for her, confounding predictions. But this striking plump blonde is also intelligent and a gifted public speaker, who as an economics professor at Istanbul's Bosphorus university entered politics only three years ago.

Her problem is naivety. Her economic policies have the Thatcherite free-market ring, but while she enjoys enormous goodwill, she has little political clout. Coalition politics are such that compromises are essential for survival, even if an early election may bring more seats for the True Path Party. Meanwhile Tansu must work with replacement president Suleyman Demirel, a crafty veteran and manipulator. The residual power of the army is another factor to reckon with.

We are passing through uncertain, dangerous times without the reassuring presence of our late president Turgut Ozal. Our biggest challenges come from an upsurge in the ongoing struggle against Kurdish separatists, and a Muslim backlash against the secular state. The combination is damaging the image of Turkey and, if unchecked, could wreck our tourist industry, one of the main props of a fragile economy. It could even bring the army back to power.

America had its Wild West and we still have our Wild East, where gunfights and killings are everyday occurrences. The brutal armed struggle by Kurdish separatists has developed into a virtual civil war. A government amnesty was suspended in May against guerillas of the outlawed PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) after they massacred a busload of unarmed former army conscripts. Many more Kurds, along with some soldiers, have been killed this month. The outlook for peace looked more hopeful in March when the PKK announced a unilateral ceasefire after suffering thousands of casualties by army attacks.

The Kurds have many legitimate grievances. Concessions to our Kurdish minority of 12 million — one in five — are long overdue, but for right-wing nationalists and the army, the old formula is still true: conciliation equals treason.

Religious bigotry has also raised its head. *The Satanic Verses* was made the excuse for a violent protest by Muslim zealots in the fly-ridden town of Sivas in eastern Anatolia. Thirty-six people died in an attack on the hotel where left-wingers were prematurely celebrating publication here of Rushdie's book. The deaths come as a sharp reminder that Istanbul and Ankara, our two big secular minded cities, are a world away from small-town Anatolia where religious bigotry is alive and well after decades of strict suppression.

The hiatus since Ozal's death has meant no high-level initiatives on key foreign issues like Bosnia or northern Iraq. We care passionately about the atrocities inflicted on Muslims in Bosnia, an old province of the Ottoman Turkish empire. In fact more Bosnians live in Turkey than in Bosnia itself, through emigration over many generations, and many Turks have come to sense that a Christian plot against Muslims is behind the "ethnic cleansing".

The spate of racist killings and attacks on Turkish "guest-worker" families in Germany, meanwhile, has added to the outrage and anger. As a result, our automatic pro-Western stance, along with the old certainties of our foreign policy, are being vigorously questioned.

In the last few years, we have often been mocked as the "lonely sentinel" on Nato's eastern flank, waiting for the invasion which will never come. It has been claimed we are quite oblivious to the dramatic political changes in the USSR, and that our 600,000-strong army has become redundant.

Yet now, with war raging in Yugoslavia, and refugees flowing out to the West, our Nato partners appreciate more than ever the potential importance of our security role in the unstable post-communist states of the Balkans, and perhaps as far afield as the Caucasus and Central Asia as well.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

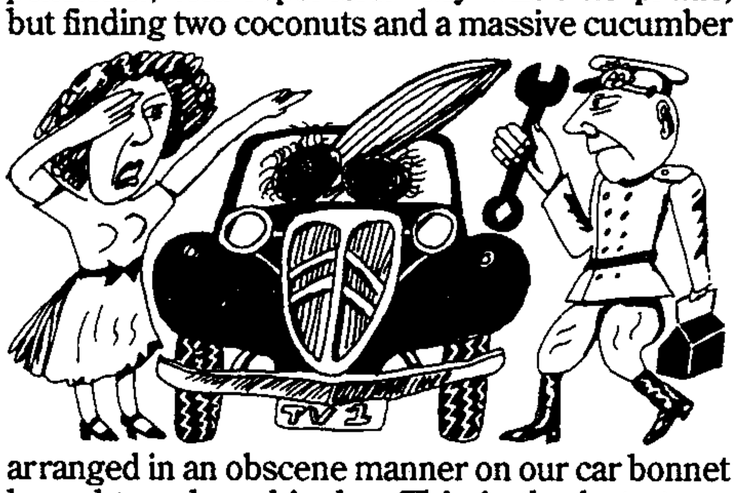
o "I AM not scum. I have diplomas. I am a man of utter integrity and there has been a most terrible misunderstanding," Janda Roipromma told an astonished Singapore judge. "I admit I dropped my pants in front of this woman but fate was to blame."

Roipromma, a 35-year-old construction worker accused of indecent exposure, claimed that his problems began while he was walking past the Tanah Merah MRT station. "I was hungry so, naturally, I climbed a nearby tree to pluck some mangoes. Unfortunately I accidentally disturbed an ants' nest. When I got down, the ants began biting my private parts so I went into the subway, took all my clothes off, and rubbed myself to brush them away. Any sane man would have done the same. Unfortunately, this woman happened by, completely misunderstood my intentions and panicked. I invited her to come closer to see the ants for herself, but she only screamed and reported me to the MRT station master, who lashed at me with a fire hose then had me arrested. Is this justice?"

Roipromma received a conditional discharge. *(Hong Kong Standard, 21/3/93. Spotter — Ian Whiteley)*

— o —

o "WE WERE disgusted," Ted Varey, a Belper pensioner, told reporters. "My wife's no prude, but finding two coconuts and a massive cucumber



PHILIP THOMPSON

arranged in an obscene manner on our car bonnet brought on her shingles. This is the last straw. Last week there was a root vegetable rammed up the exhaust pipe also in a suggestive manner. We had to call the AA out."

The incident was the last in a series of obscene fruit displays that have been mysteriously appearing on local cars, the work of a prowler known to the police only as 'General Gherkin'. "Usually it's just an apple, an orange and a banana," explained a spokesman from Mackworth College, "but now the General's started getting nasty. That last cucumber was over a foot long."

A spokesman admitted that police were baffled, but promised that all greengrocers in the Belper area would be interviewed. *(The Belper Express, 8/7/93. Spotter — Hugh Binns)*

— o —

o *A GHANAIAN coroner's court has heard from a friend of the late Theophilus Kwarme Gakpo how he became impatient while he waited in a long queue outside a public convenience in Accra. "He insisted we should use the manhole behind the main toilet instead, even though it meant trespassing. We climbed the fence, prised off the slabs, and then he squatted at the edge to relieve himself. His last words to me were: 'I must have eaten well last night, a flock of sparrows is leaving me.' Unfortunately the rain had made the slabs slippery and Theophilus slipped to his death. His grandmother always said he would end up in deep shit."*

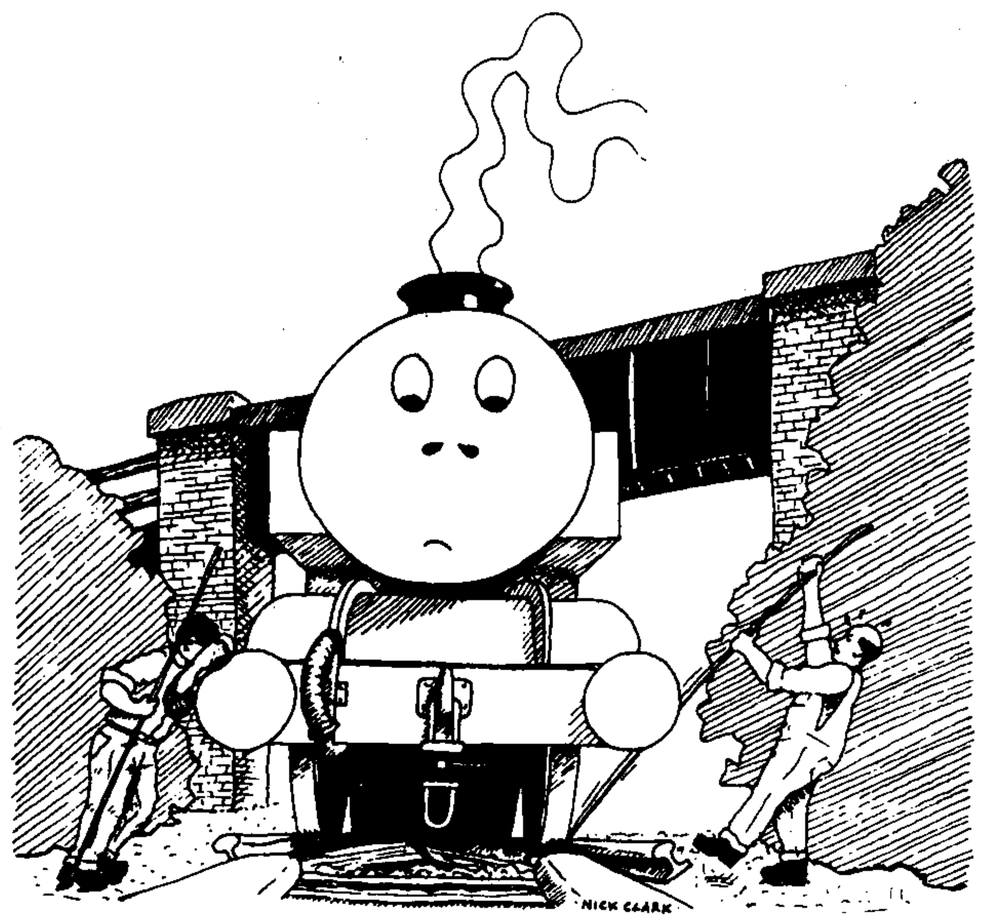
The coroner recorded a verdict of death by misadventure. (The Nation, Indonesia, 26/4/93. Spotter — Colin McDonald)

Compiled by
Victor Lewis-Smith

THOMAS

THE PRIVATISED TANK ENGINE

Thomas's summer holiday



"THIS track's too bumpy," said Thomas, lurching cautiously along his branch line. "It's giving me a headache."

"Yes. Didn't you know our boys have taken a maintenance holiday?" said his driver.

"It's all right for some. When do they come back from the Costa del Sol?"

"Er, they won't be back, Thomas."

"What?"

"It's all part of bringing private enterprise into railway management – cutting everything but the fares."

THE Fat Controller braved the rain that afternoon as Thomas took his nap. "Thomas, meet Selina the Sprinter Unit. She's taking over your branch line from today."

"Rubbish! She's not man enough for the job."

"You know we're an equal opportunities employer."

"But she's only two carriages long. How will all the summer holidaymakers manage?"

"The fact is, Thomas, she's a lot lighter than you."

"You! You..." spluttered Thomas. *"You're* telling *me* I'm overweight?"

The Fat Controller turned red. "Look, Thomas. She'll cause less damage to the track during the maintenance holiday."

But once the Fat Controller had driven away, Thomas made his way to the station as usual, blocking Selina's access to the platform.

"I'm not having that fat bugger telling me to watch my boilerline," huffed Thomas indignantly as he made his usual journey up the branch line. "I'll show him who's too heavy..."

But just then he started to feel unsteady. The rails parted beneath his wheels and he crunched to a halt.

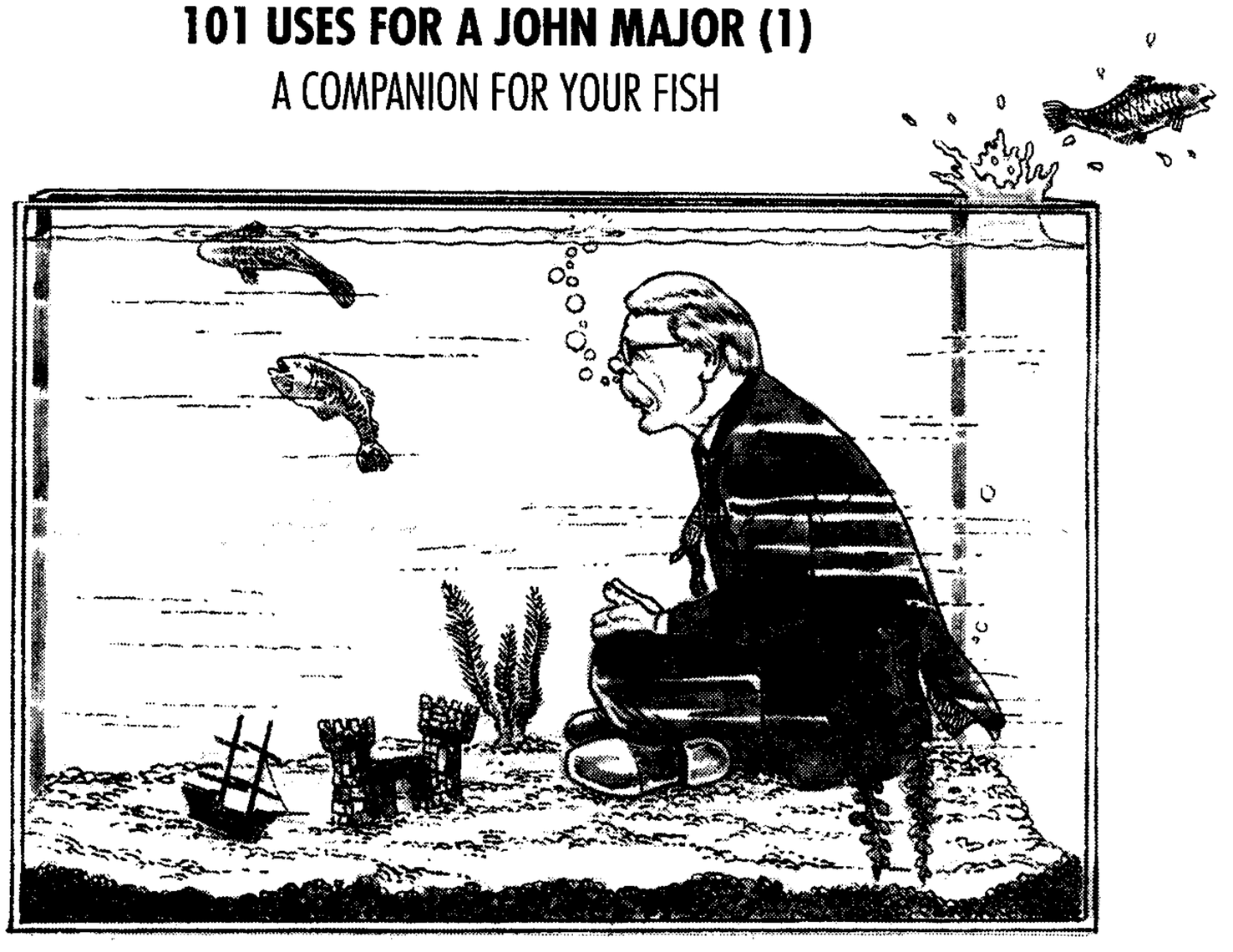
Despite the rain, the passengers were happy to lend a hand with the jacks when they heard that the maintenance boys were on holiday. "They deserve a week off," said one lady, dish-ing out cakes and tea from a Thermos flask.

The Fat Controller raced up alongside in his car. "I told you to stay away from here!" he roared at Thomas from his car window. "Get back to the junction immediately!"

Selina the Sprinter Unit was waiting to take the passengers as Thomas returned sheepishly to the junction. "Hallo, Thomas," she said with a false smile. "Your P45 is in the Fat Controller's office."

101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR (1)

A COMPANION FOR YOUR FISH



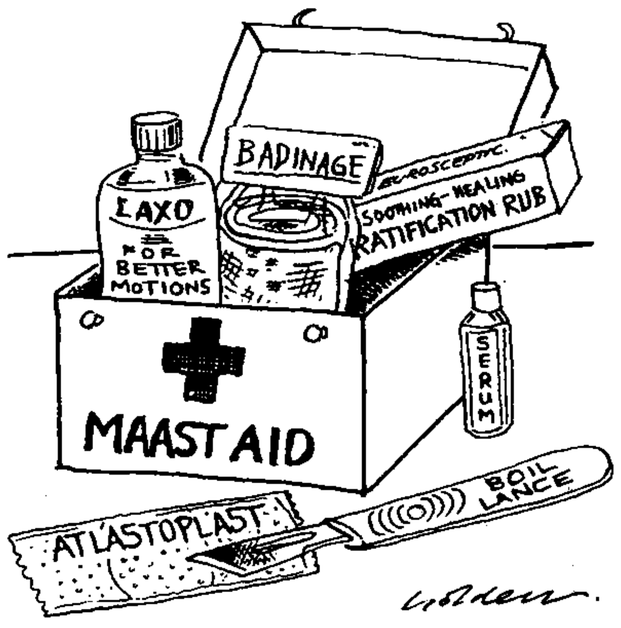
The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Sunday

Today for the first time ever I have had to miss the social highlight of the year — my friend Lord Archer's garden party. Norman had to go on her own and said she met lots of famous people, like Mr Gummer and the man who plays Inspector Morse on the television (I think). I was far too busy preparing my historic speech which will win over the Tory rebels once and for all. "Back me or I stay," that will be my theme.

Monday

Lord Rees-Mogg has in no small measure got into my little black book again. He is going to the courts to get the judges to say that my Maastricht Treaty is illegal. This is totally undemocratic, as our lawyers have



already assured me that it is perfectly legal even if Parliament rejects it!

The Treaty now has the Royal Assent, which means that the Queen must have said she likes it. (This is another triumph for myself by the way as I promised her that her head would still appear on the stamps.)

But just as I was wondering whether I could sue Lord Rees-Mogg for libelling me, Mr Hurd came in and said that Lord Mogg's challenge was the best news since Mr Lamont resigned. "Why?" I asked him. "Because it means that so long as the case is before the courts," he explained, "Maastricht is sub-judice, which means that we don't have to talk about it any more."

To celebrate this not inconsiderably satisfactory development I went out with a few photographers to the shop where my ex-friend Mr Mellor used to go and bought a CD. I chose one of a skiffle group called "Lonnie Donegan at 80". No one can say now that I am out of touch! Oh no.

Wednesday

Talking of Mr Lamont, I am very glad to say that he has turned over a new leaf and has quite put his old bitterness behind him. Today he got up in the House of Commons and congratulated Mr Clarke on the fact that all his new policies were working so quickly. Mr Lamont pointed out that since he had stopped being Chancellor, the recession had immediately come to an end and Britain was now having an economic boom thanks entirely to Mr Clarke.

Unfortunately a lot of MPs laughed at Mr Lamont for saying this, but he took it in good heart and smiled broadly back. When I got home my wife Norman was waiting up for me, even though it was long after half-past-eight.

"Hullo, John," she said, "I've just seen your bust."

"You are quite wrong," I said, "everyone says that I am going to win on Thursday."

She then explained that she had been invited to an art gallery where there was a statue of me! It shows I am getting quite famous!

"What is it like?" I asked her.

"Well," she replied, handing me an individual portion of M&S's Salmon and Coriander Fish Cake Provençal, "everyone thought it was a bit dull, grey and lifeless, but I thought it looked just like you."

Thursday

This was the most historic of my many historic days recently. And I am in no small measure furious at the way some of my party have behaved. They are bastards. I would not say this to anyone, but in the privacy of my own diary I have to say that they are not inconsiderable bastards. And disloyal bastards as well.

I spent the whole day in the Commons being nice to them and my friend Sir Norma Fowler backed me up by telling them that he would put them in one of his prisons if they didn't vote for me. But they all laughed. Fortunately there were some very nice Irishmen who said that they would support me. "There will be no deal with you," I said. "OK," they agreed, and added "and no deal with Dublin." They gave me a big wink and said: "It's a deal."

Usually these Irishmen are against Europe but today they were for it. Just as usually Labour are for Europe but today they are against it. It is all very confusing.

As I said in my very well received indeed speech: "Everyone except us is voting the opposite way to what they believe in." "That's because you don't believe in anything," shouted someone who can only be described as a bastard. Then we had a vote and some of the people who I now refer to as Bastards went through the wrong door marked "No" instead of the one marked "Aye". The score was: US 316 all out; THEM 324. The other side all started cheering as if they had won.

But they hadn't. Oh no. At our regular routine Emergency Cabinet Meeting in the middle of the night, as Mr Waldegrave was passing round the Horlicks, I had a brilliant idea. "Mr Hurd," I said. "What shall we do next?"

Mr Hurd then handed me a new motion to vote on tomorrow called a vote of confidence. It read:

"This House supports Mr Major because otherwise there will be an election and we'll all lose our jobs because he is so useless."

Friday

It worked. The House of Commons finally came to their senses and voted for my brilliant handling of the Maastricht Treaty.

Mr O'Donnell was jubilant. "We can now draw a line under Maastricht," he said, "and move forward to lose the

Christchurch by-election." I agreed. We shall certainly hear no more of the bastards or rebels, as they used to be known.

Sunday

I cannot believe it. I thought we had drawn a line under this. The newspapers are suggesting that I have called the rebels bastards just because I said so to a television reporter! "What bastards!" I said to my wife Norman in bed. "It was all off the record." "Which record was that?" she asked. "Was it your Lonnie Donegan one?" She seems to be in an inappropriately good mood at the moment and keeps singing "Goodbye Downing Street" cheerfully under her breath.

MEMO: The following are in my judgement bastards and are now in my special Black Book of Bastards.

1) Edward Heath. How dare he criticise my leadership? He was a total failure who got us into Europe in the first place.

2) Mrs Thatcher. Ditto. Her period of office was a disaster for this country. *Not* a Golden Age at all as some of these bastards think.

3) All the Bastards who think that Thatcher's was a Golden Age. Including: a) Mr Portillo; b) Mr Howard; c) Mr Redwood; d) Mr Lilley; e) Lots of other bastards as well.

It would be easy to sack these people. That would be the cowardly route. It is much braver not to sack them in case they cause trouble.

Look what happened with Norma Lamont and Mr Mates!

Monday

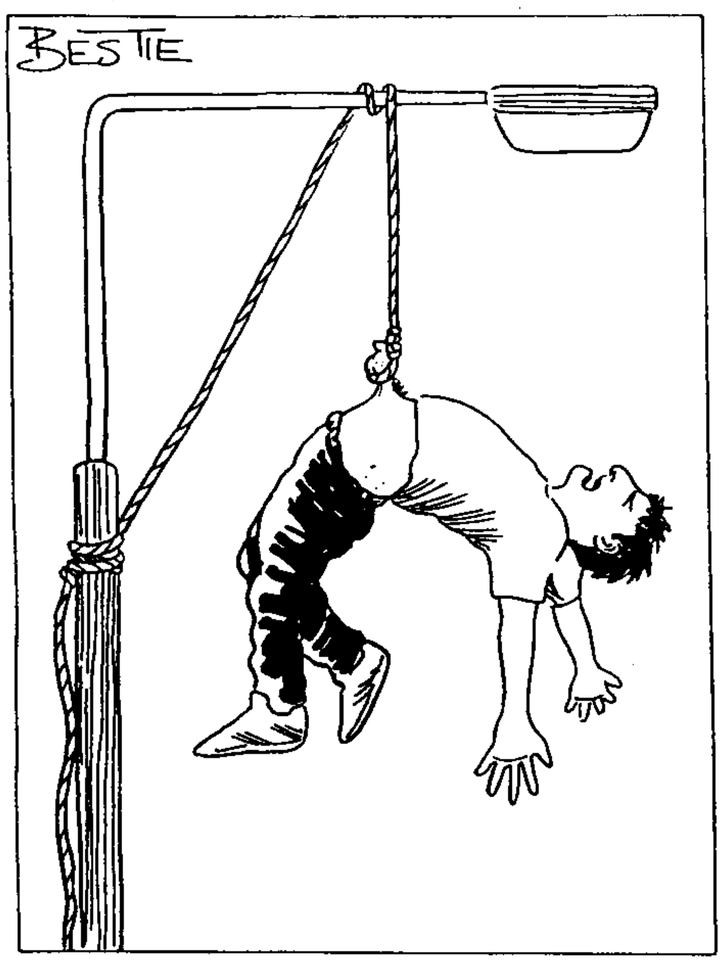
I called Mr O'Donnell round to No. 10 today to demand an apology from the BBC for leaking my remarks about Bastards. "It must have been them," I said, "because they have it in for me."

"They are not the only ones, Prime Minister," he said. "But anyway 'Bastardgate' has been a great success for you. It shows that you are tough-talking and aren't frightened to say what you think. The whole thing might make you less unpopular, like when you didn't have an affair with the cook." This was very encouraging.

"Perhaps I should go to Christchurch and tell the voters that if they didn't vote for me they were bastards," I suggested.

Mr O'Donnell thought this was a brilliant idea, but unfortunately he had arranged for me to be in Siberia this week on a very important trade mission.

PREMIÈREN: Sir Arnold Weber og kona Madeline ankommer Adelphi Theatre i London på premièrekvelden for hans nye musical «Sunset Boulevard». *Aftenposten (Oslo)*



After years of research car manufacturers have finally found a way to deter car thieves

Notes & Queries

QUESTION: Who invented chips?

☐ YOUR correspondent from Yorkshire, J.R. Hattersley, is only partially correct in claiming that it was Isaac Braithwaite of Ilkley who first concocted what we now recognise as chips in 1796. Braithwaite, a wealthy potato merchant, had travelled extensively through Europe and whilst in northern France had stayed overnight at a small Benedictine monastery in Caen. He recorded in his diary on 7 November 1794:

"Last night we dined on an extraordinary dish which the Breton monks refer to as 'les chips'. They are made by throwing slivers of finger-length potato into a pan of sizzling pork fat. They are then eaten hot and served folded in a copy of the previous day's news journal, in this case *Le Soleil* of 6th November."

Clearly Braithwaite took the formula home to Yorkshire where two years later he introduced it, as Hattersley noted, in lieu of wages to his itinerant Irish work force. — *Mr P.B.R. Golden-Wonder, Finchley.*

QUESTION: Is it true, as was recently suggested, that George Washington was Jewish?

☐ THERE is some circumstantial evidence to support this claim, made in the recently published book *So Now I'm Telling Lies?* by Professor Lionel Blueberry of Princeton University. Blueberry's thesis relies on a little-known incident when Washington first took office as President. The menu for his inauguration lunch, which was lavish even by the standard of the times, included a large hamburger known as a "Yankee Doodle Double". However it was noted by a guest, the Marquis de Spencer, that the new President had eaten everything except the hamburger, which was of course forbidden to Orthodox Jews like Washington because it contained ham. — *Rabbi Julia Hamburger, London.*

QUESTION: Who was the first person to wear a moustache?

☐ EVERYONE who has written on this subject to date is wrong. Largely because they are incapable of viewing the question from outside the Eurocentric bias. 1,000 years before Prince Häagen-Dazs of Bohemia sported a hairy upper lip (Mr J. Oxleas, 7 March 1992) and 500 years before Wogan the Jute did the same (B.M. Twyford's contribution on 28 January 1991), the Ottoman Emperor Achmed ben Mushtaq III, decreed that no male over the age of 16 could shave his facial hair above the lip "upon pain of death". Instituted as a memorial to his brother Mohammed Mushtaq, who had died in a shaving accident during the Third Mesopotamian War, the fashion for an unshaved upper lip quickly spread through the ancient world and became known as "the Mushtaq" or "Moustache". (See other eponyms such as Wellington, Sandwich, Trouser-Press.) — *Günther Gillette, Institute of Trichological Research, Zurich.*

NEXT WEEK: Answers please for the following: Where are we? Do the Swiss Army use their knives? Do bananas cause male-pattern baldness? Do crabs see colours? What's Donald Trelford up to nowadays?

WORLD OF ART

Countdown for Turner prize

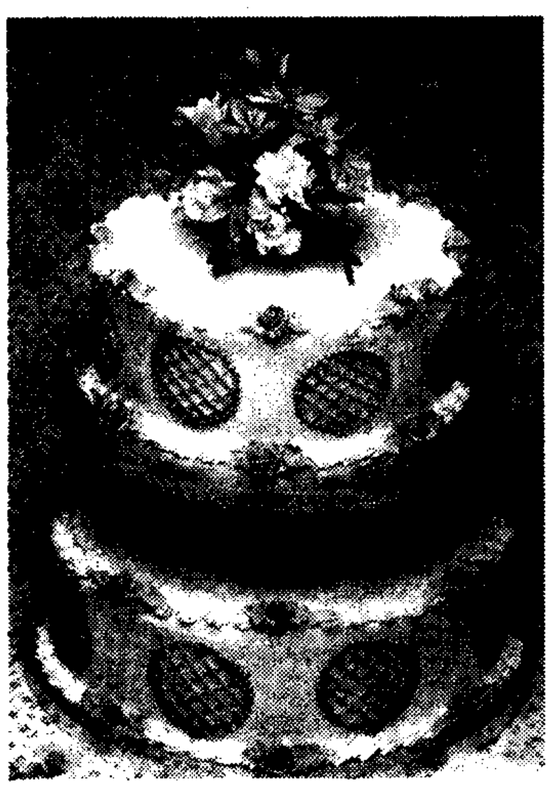
Tension mounts

by Our Art Correspondent **Brine R. Sewell**

With all the entries for the prestigious Turner Prize now submitted, three artists have emerged as hot favourites.

They are:

● **Pauline McQuark**, 27, from the Auchtermuchty School of Art. Since graduating she has worked in the medium of cake, coming third in the Venice Biennale with her "Also Spracht Mr Kipling". Her "Jane Asher's Cake" won fourth prize at the Auchtermuchty Flower Festival in June.

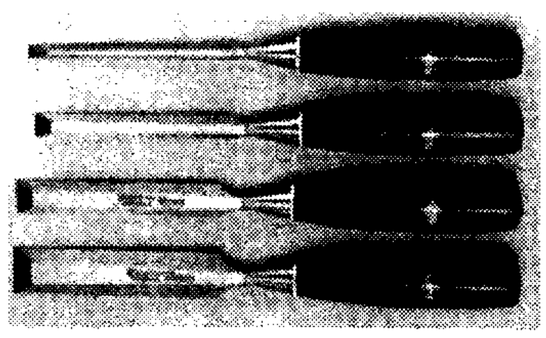


Cake 1993 by Pauline McQuark

● **Quinlan Teasmade**, 19. Teasmade has yet to go to Art School. He finds it "hard to respond to external stimuli" (interview with *Time Out*, 1992). Teasmade's "Mountain Bike" has been acclaimed as a breakthrough in the currentlly dormant medium of conceptual art.

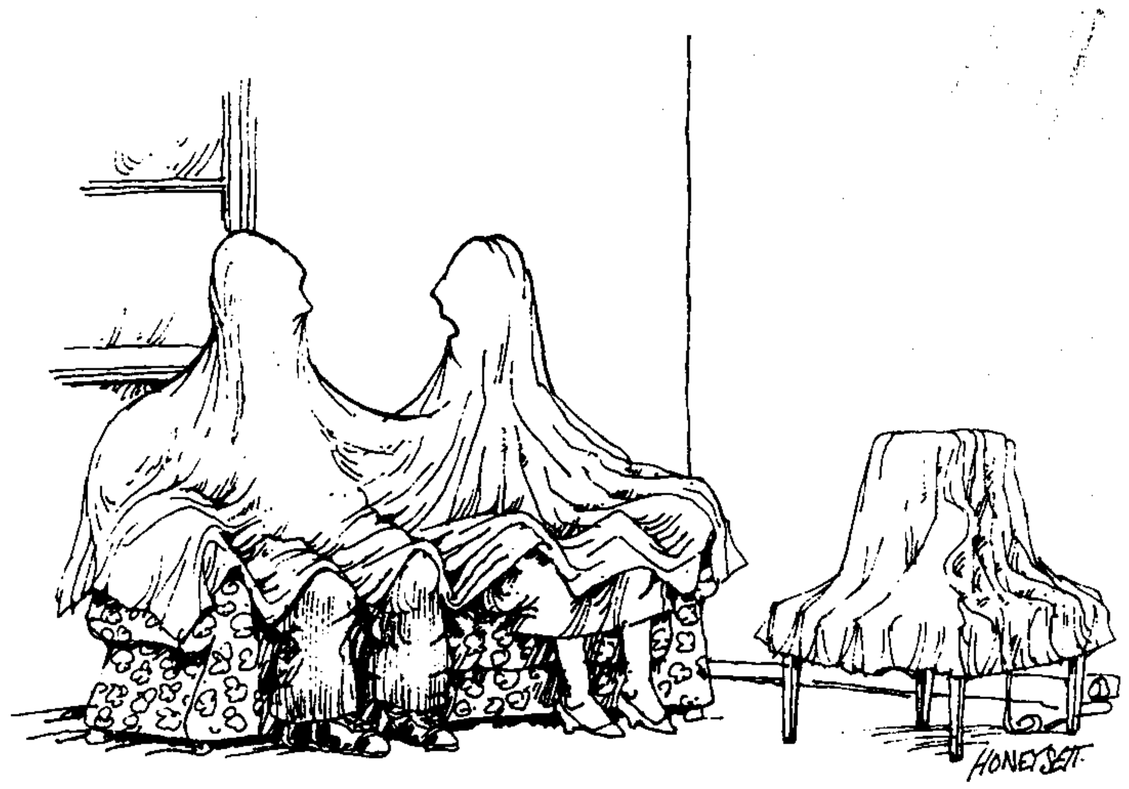
Raleigh Mustang, 1993 (detail) by Quinlin Teasmade

● **Paddy O'Murphy**, 49. Not best known for his work outside the Walthamstow area ("Painting Decorating and Plastering — No Job Too Small"), O'Murphy was encouraged to exhibit after working in the Tate Gallery extension where he was spotted by Gallery Supremo Nicholas Serota.



Chisels, 1993 by Paddy O'Murphy

"Ladies and gentlemen, fellow dinosaurs, this Oscar is not just for me and I'd like to thank..."



"What time did you say the decorators were coming?"

NEW GENE DISCOVERY PROVOKES ETHICAL DEBATE

by Our Scientific Staff **Gene Kelly**

AMERICAN researchers have discovered an amazing new gene, according to a paper published by the University of New Dworkin last week. The gene, known as "the Boffin gene", is believed to determine whether or not a child will develop "scientific tendencies" that could in time lead him or her to become "a confirmed scientist".

The news has been greeted with dismay by many in the scientific community, who had long believed that becoming a scientist was a matter of personal choice.

Said one man in a white coat: "This will do nothing to lessen the stigma attached to our orientation. People will still see us as outcasts and freaks."

And the discovery opens the way for those who disapprove of their offspring becoming scientists to opt for termination at an early stage.

Frank Boffin

Another practising scientist said: "This is just like Hitler. You shouldn't stop people from being scientific just because of the Boffin gene."

However, a number of other commentators working in the field have pointed to the Boffin gene as a great help in the fight for recognition.

Said one: "This proves that being a scientist is perfectly natural and we should be free to get on with our private research, no matter how ridiculous or dangerous it might be."

Poetry Corner

The Scarlet-Faced Wimp-Rebel

by Baroness Thatcher

They seek him here
They seek him there
Those Tories seek him everywhere.

Is he in Bermuda?
Is he in Brest?
That damned elusive Nigel West.

(Who cares? Ed.)

(Extracted from the novel 'Allason Wonderland', SpookPress £19.99)

APOLOGY

In common with all other newspapers, we may have given the impression in recent weeks that we believed the Anti-Maastricht rebels in the Conservative Party to be men of principle who were prepared to put their consciences before the interest of the Party. Features such as "Bill Cash — A Hero For Our Times", "We Salute the 23" and "Fearless Fighters For Freedom" may have led readers to believe that the so-called rebels were in some way champions of individual liberty.

We now realise that there was not a jot or tittle of truth whatsoever in such disgraceful allegations. Following the vote of confidence, we are happy to accept that the rebels are, in fact, a bunch of time-serving jobsworths whose lily livers failed them at the final fence. We would like to take this opportunity to apologise to them and express our sincere regrets for any damage we may have caused to their reputation.

ON OTHER PAGES ● *Cash — This Jumped Up Judas* ● ***Rebels Without Applause by Paul Johnson*** ● *Unfunny Maastricht Cartoon by Everyone*

"Typical! You wait all day for one, then 50 or 60 of them come along all at once!"

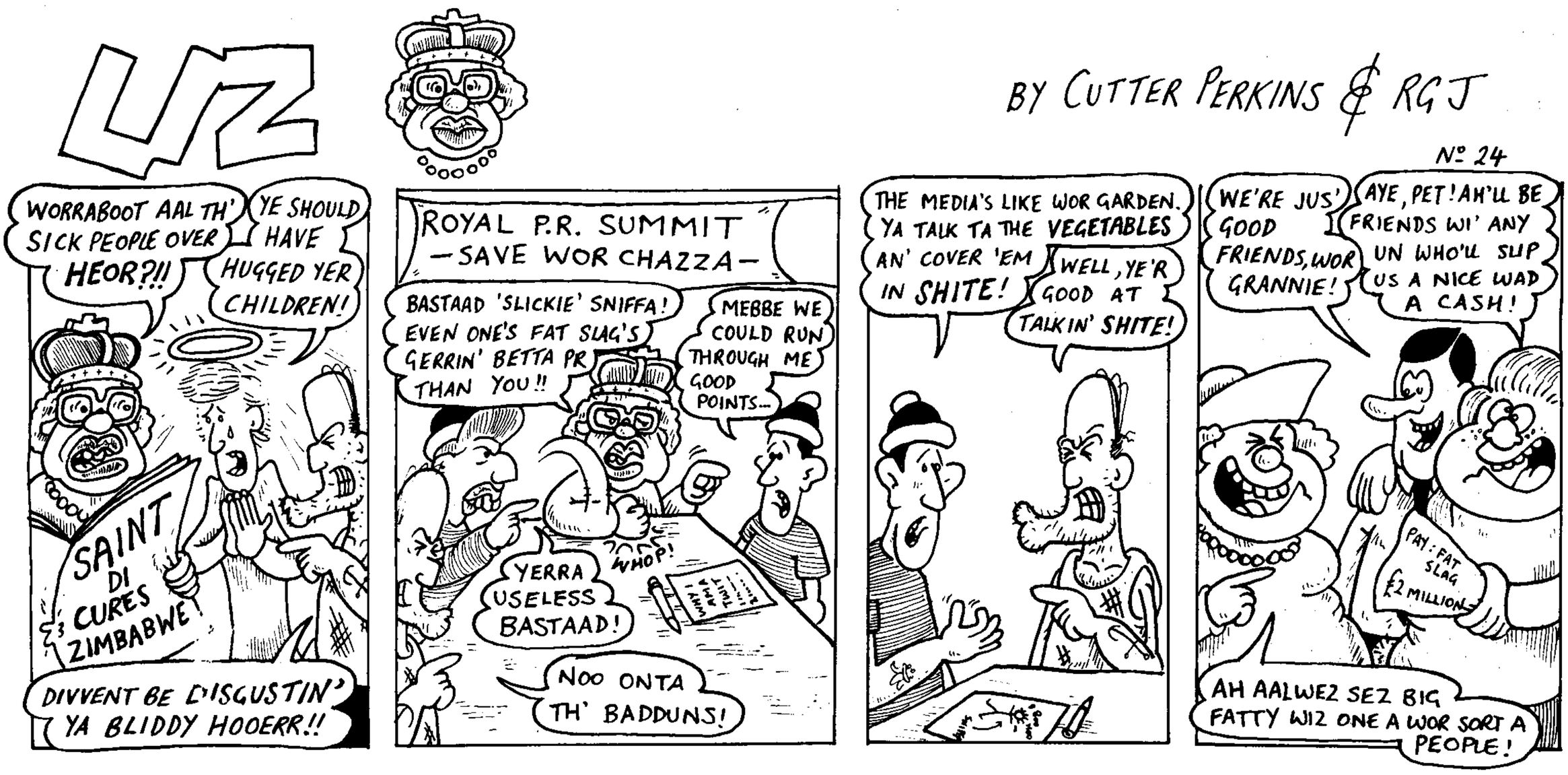
SUMMER QUIZ

SPOT THE BASTARD!

Look carefully at this photograph and put a circle on the three members of the Cabinet whom you think John Major called Bastards. Then complete the following phrase: *"I would rather have Michael Portillo in the tent than..."*

1st Prize
FREE copy of
Social Chapter

Send to: BASTARD QUIZ,
Conservative Central Office,
John Smith Square,
Maastricht.


UZ
BY CUTTER PERKINS & RGJ
Nº 24
WORRABOOT AAL TH' SICK PEOPLE OVER HEOR?!!
YE SHOULD HAVE HUGGED YER CHILDREN!
SAINT DI CURES ZIMBABWE
DIVVENT BE DISGUSTIN' YA BLIDDY HOOERR!!
ROYAL P.R. SUMMIT —SAVE WOR CHAZZA—
BASTAAD 'SLICKIE' SNIFFA! EVEN ONE'S FAT SLAG'S GERRIN' BETTA PR THAN YOU!!
MEBBE WE COULD RUN THROUGH ME GOOD POINTS...
WHOP!
YERRA USELESS BASTAAD!
NOO ONTA TH' BADDUNS!
THE MEDIA'S LIKE WOR GARDEN. YA TALK TA THE VEGETABLES AN' COVER 'EM IN SHITE!
WELL, YE'R GOOD AT TALKIN' SHITE!
WE'RE JUS' GOOD FRIENDS, WOR GRANNIE!
AYE, PET! AH'LL BE FRIENDS WI' ANY UN WHO'LL SLIP US A NICE WAD A CASH!
PAY: FAT SLAG £2 MILLION
AH AALWEZ SEZ BIG FATTY WIZ ONE A WOR SORT A PEOPLE!

Beefy at 12 — had yet to show his promise.

Beefy's Finest Hour — at St Pancras in 1974 when he achieved the lowest score in history — 2 votes.

End of an era as 'Beefy' Major stays put

by Our Man With The Cake **Old Johnners**

The world of politics will never be the same again.

That was the shock news from Westminster as one of the most towering nonentities in the history of politics decided to stay in the game.

"Beefy" Major announced that his decision not to quit while he was still at the bottom had been the easiest of his career.

Friends and colleagues last night were slow to pay tribute to the man who has been known to millions as "that little chap with the suit and glasses — what's his name?"

Rock Botham

The figures of Major's astonishing career speak for themselves. In 1991 he hit the lowest score ever recorded by a prime minister in an opinion poll — 21 per cent.

The following year he broke his own record in a dazzling series of poll findings — 19 per cent, 13 per cent, 7 per cent and minus 2 per cent.

"The Government should follow up this decision by allowing a return of capital punishment in state schools when parents approve."

Sir Rhodes Boyson quoted in the Leicester Mercury

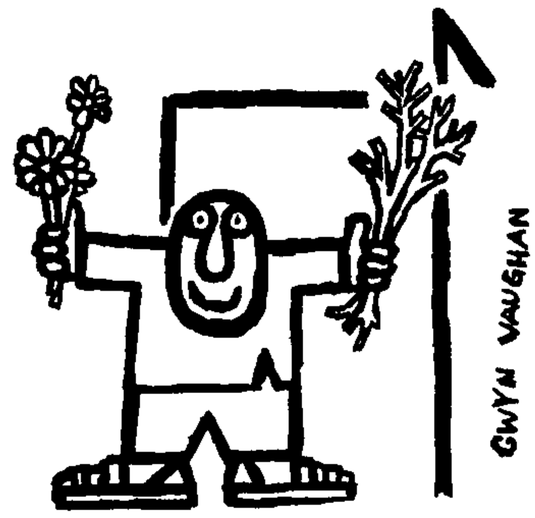
Leading England to defeat in 1993

But off the field his conduct was even more boring. In 1990 he was accused of not being the son of a trapeze artist.

No Levels

In 1991 he raised eyebrows by his amazing display of forgetfulness in claiming that he could not remember how many O Levels he never had.

More recently he thrilled no one at all when it was revealed that he had not had an affair with the cook.



"Hi, honey — I'm homeopathic!"

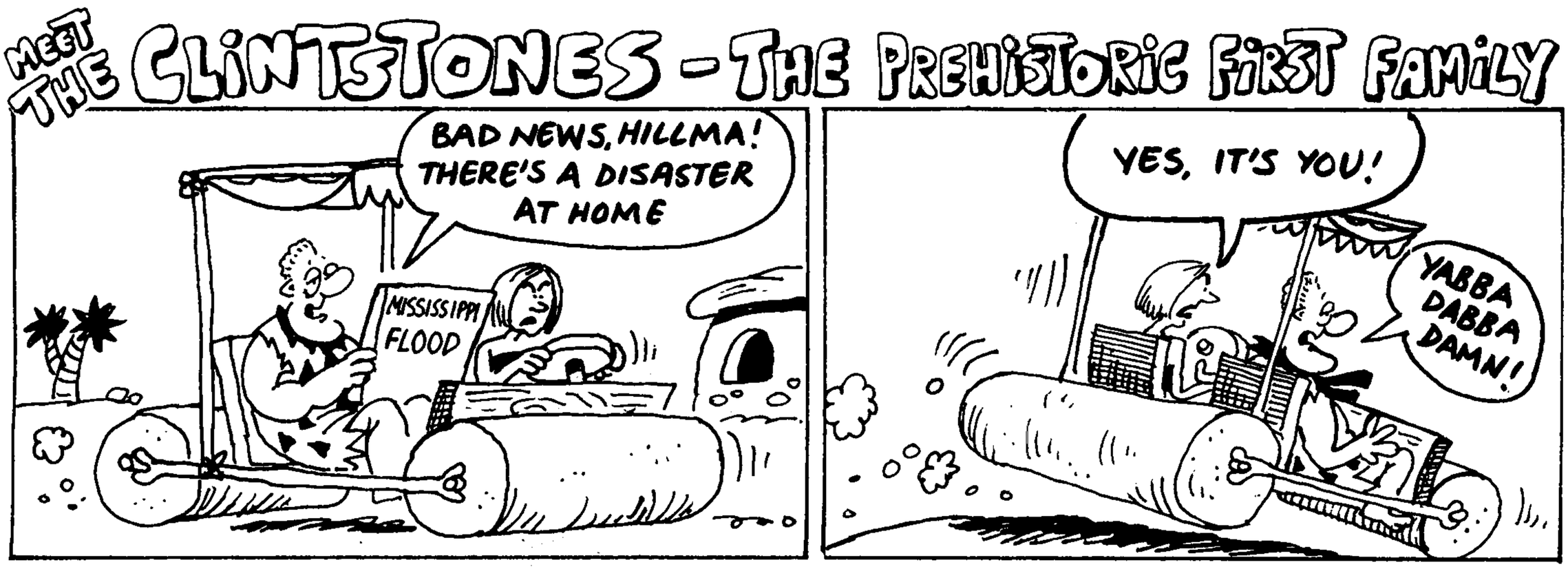
LATE NEWS

FLOOD CHAOS LATEST

THIS morning bemused residents are still counting the cost of the worst floods in living memory after they hit the House of Lords.

It happened during a debate on the Maastricht Bill and there was little or no warning. The Missithatchi suddenly burst her banks and poured out millions of gallons of muddy water all over the Upper House.

Said one gnarled old survivor: "It was terrible. One minute I was asleep, the next I was engulfed in this overpowering torrent. I tell you, never underestimate the power of the ol' Missithatchi. Nowadays she may look pretty slow-moving but deep down she's just waiting to swallow us all up, yes, sirree."


MEET THE CLINTSTONES - THE PREHISTORIC FIRST FAMILY
BAD NEWS, HILLMA! THERE'S A DISASTER AT HOME
MISSISSIPPI FLOOD
YES, IT'S YOU!
YABBA DABBA DAMN!

Chester Square SW1

Dear Bill,

Sorry to have been off line for a few months, but one of Margaret's "ghosts" working on her book has been using my typewriter. There are now five of them, would you believe, beavering away in the lounge, the younger ones all suitably accoutred with floppy softwear and Apple Macintoshes. My old Olivetti was bagged by Professor Stone, who is writing the chapter "How I Ended The Cold War". He is a rough diamond from Oxford but it must be said in his favour that he has been banned for life from the Grape and Loincloth in Turl Street for making indecent proposals to a one-armed bandit.

What, you may ask, is the Boss's involvement in her exclusive and intimate memoirs? Pretty marginal, as far as I can determine. During the day she toddles off to Chateau McAlpine to rally the Court in Exile, then come snort-time she returns, eyes blazing, to pour a quadruple brownie and listen to the day's output from the ghosts, most of whom are well ahead of her in the Electric Soup Stakes by this time, particularly the Prof.

As you can imagine, the inky-fingered scribes do not have it all their own way. The other night that Spectator smoothie Moore who looks like something out of the Aquascutum Catalogue was in full flood on the hostilities over those Godforsaken islands in the South Atlantic...

"Controversy has continued to surround my crucial decision to sink the Belgrano..." he faltered, peering into his little screen and toying with his "mouse". "What nonsense!" stormed the Little Woman, "Strike that out at once! Everyone agreed I was right, read The Sun! The only craven voice was your Etonian confrere, that Labour backbencher called Tam O'Shanter or some such name who had been mistakenly released into the community!"

At this she sprang up, refilled her glass, and struck wildly at the console of our raincoat modelling friend's personal computer. Consternation ensued. The screen went blank, and a flashing message appeared saying "Your book has gone down the plughole" before being replaced by multi-coloured fish swimming about among bubbles. Knowing my wife you can picture the aftermath. Someone from IBM eventually turned out in the small hours and agreed to mend it in exchange for a couple of peerages.

Talking of the ermine, the old girl came a bit of a cropper at the Oddfellows' Hall, or "the Other Place" as it is referred to by the inmates. Aided and abetted by the hollow-eyed Munster, Margaret decided to make a last stand against the Eurothreat, rallying the geriatric hordes to the barricades with a cry of "Ils ne passeront pas," but obviously in English.

There is no doubt at all that little Major got the wind up, and word was sent out to the shires to summon the lame, the halt and the mentally impaired to turn the tide. Honestly, Bill, you've never seen such a shower since we visited Maurice's mother at that home in Swanage, when he ran the electric wheelchair through the stained glass window. I had to sit next to some ghastly dowager in black lace who had come all the way from Rutland and kept nudging me in the ribs and suggesting we went to the bar together for a stiff one. Everyone was there, Oystereyes tanked up to the gills, Howe, Carrington, Lawson, all her old cast-offs, out for blood and sniggering. Then, on the other side, that jailbird friend of Wilson's who made rubber macs, and a lot of Labourites you vaguely remember from Madame Tussauds.

That old Welsh bore who used to be Speaker at Halitosis Hall, Lord Tonysnowden – you remember, everyone used to imitate him saying "Order, order!" – drew a few tears, bleating on in his cracked voice about Britishness, which was a bit ripe coming from some Taff Merthyr Tydfil bible thumper, with Margaret nodding her head a good deal. Then Munster was up for what seemed like an eternity talking about Dirty Doings in the Woodshed, and by the time Margaret's turn came most of them were asleep or drunk or both, and quite frankly, Bill, who could blame them?

That claret-swilling fat cat from Oxford had already scattered marbles on the stairs, congratulating her for having got us into Europe in the first place, so there was no great surprise when the old Scotch fraud in the wig who sits on the Woolsack read out the score as "Thatcher Nul Points".

As if that wasn't enough for my good lady's always fragile equipoise, a letter arrived the following morning, demanding that she turn up to be cross-questioned by a lot of jumped up overpaid judges about the sale of gun barrels to Saddam Hussein that could have been used for sewage works. I said why didn't they ask the Boy Mark, he knew all about that sort of thing, and Krakatoa erupted as of yore.

Did you get Maurice's invitation to his wedding at Blackpool Tower? I don't know who she is, but the Major thinks they met on a Saga Tour of "The Deptford Pubs Dickens Knew". She is all of seventy and weighs in, I am told, at thirty stone in her elasticated stockings. We are promised "bungee jumping" from the top platform and Karaoke in the Chamber of Horrors organised by Classic FM. Sounds fun.

Yours all lit up,

Denis

IN THE COURTS

Magna Carta cited in historic case

Mogg v. Major
Before Mr Justice Cocklecarrot

Sir Huge Price QC: My Lord, I represent Lord Rees-Mogg and indeed the whole British nation. They are come before you as quasitors, under their ancient right enshrined in the Mogna Carta, which states, as you will recall, My Lord, that nemo aliquid me impune nesciunt impudentes Frogges et Krautes sunt omnes illegitimus.

Cocklecarrot: Illegitim*i*, I fancy, Sir Ludicrous.

Price: As Your Lordship pleases.

(Court cleared as everyone faints at example of judicial erudition and wit)

Sir Kenilworth Largefee QC *(for the Prime Minister and the Conservative Party, A. Nadir prop.)*: Melud, I would refer you to one of the oldest principles of our common law, as stated by Jeffries, J. in *Rex v. Monmouth* 1685, where he says: "Ye government shall be entitled to act in whatsoever and wheresoever a manner as it sees fit, and anyone who shall say to the contrary should be strungeth up, that being the only tongue such a person, whomsoever he may be, can comprehendeth."

Cocklecarrot: I see in this note that I have just been handed by the Lord Chancellor that I am to find in favour of the defendants. Oh, I'm sorry, I'm not meant to read that bit out. Kindly strike it from the record. Pray continue, Sir Huge Fee,

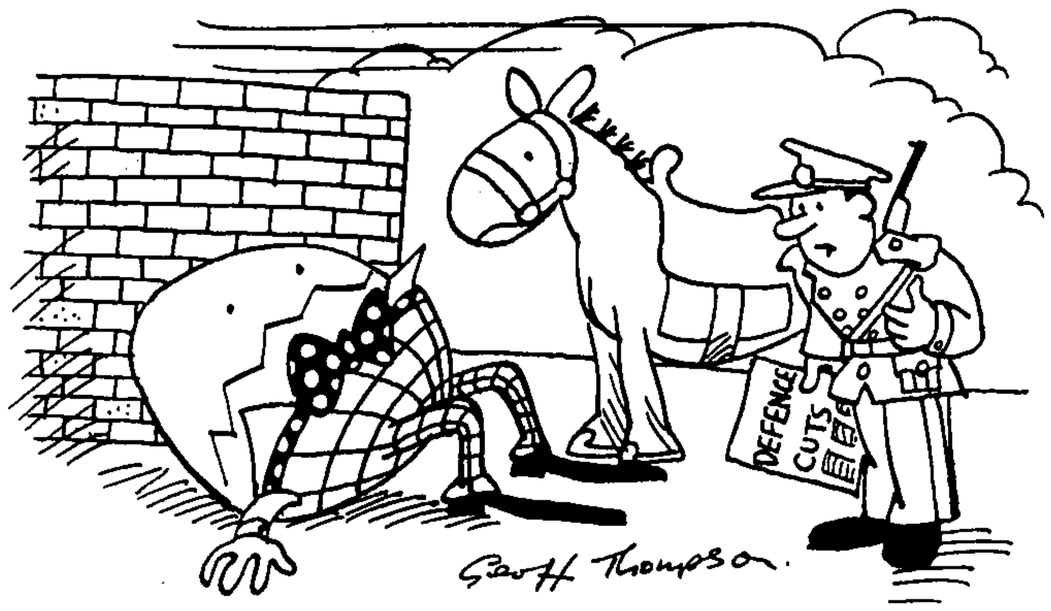
Price QC: My Lord, this case concerns, I submit, the gravest and most boring constitutional issue that has confronted this country since the unfortunate events of 1642.

Cocklecassock: To what do you refer, Mr Pricey?

Price: It is our case, My Lord, that, in seeking to impose the Maastricht Treaty on an unwilling nation, Mr Major is guilty of the ancient offence of scandalum mognatum, namely and to wit, that he was driving a vehicle in a built-up area at a speed of 32 miles per hour. I am so sorry, My Lord, this refers to my previous case.

Judge: It certainly sounds more interesting than this one. *(Renewed laughter)* Did I hear that Sir James Goldsmith is footing the bill? In that case, I think we can spin this one out at least until Christmas. I suggest a two-month adjournment so that we can all prepare our fees.

(The case continues)



"We ARE *all the King's horses and all the King's men"*

IT'S DINO-MANIA AT GNOMEMART!!

Now you can join the biggest craze for 60 million years with these fantastic Jurassic Park gifts!!

The Bronto Bin-Liner
LINE your bin the Spielberg way with these exciting Brontosaurus Black PVC waste disposal bags. Fun for all the family as they "eat up" your unwanted refuse!! **100 bags £49.95**
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Stegosaurus String
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As Speaker I am the custodian of the rights of parliament and I must rule...

... that the courts have no right to take away the supreme power of parliament...

... to vote on a bill...

... to hand over all its powers to Brussels.

POETRY CORNER

Lines written on the Departure of Mr Brian Redhead from the *Today* Programme and the Appointment of Mr James Naughtie as his Successor

by E.J. Thribbi-Blue

So. Farewell then
Brian Redhead.

You are leaving the
Today programme
To become a
Vicar.

"And now today's
Weather."
That was your
Catchphrase.

This will also be
James Naughtie's.

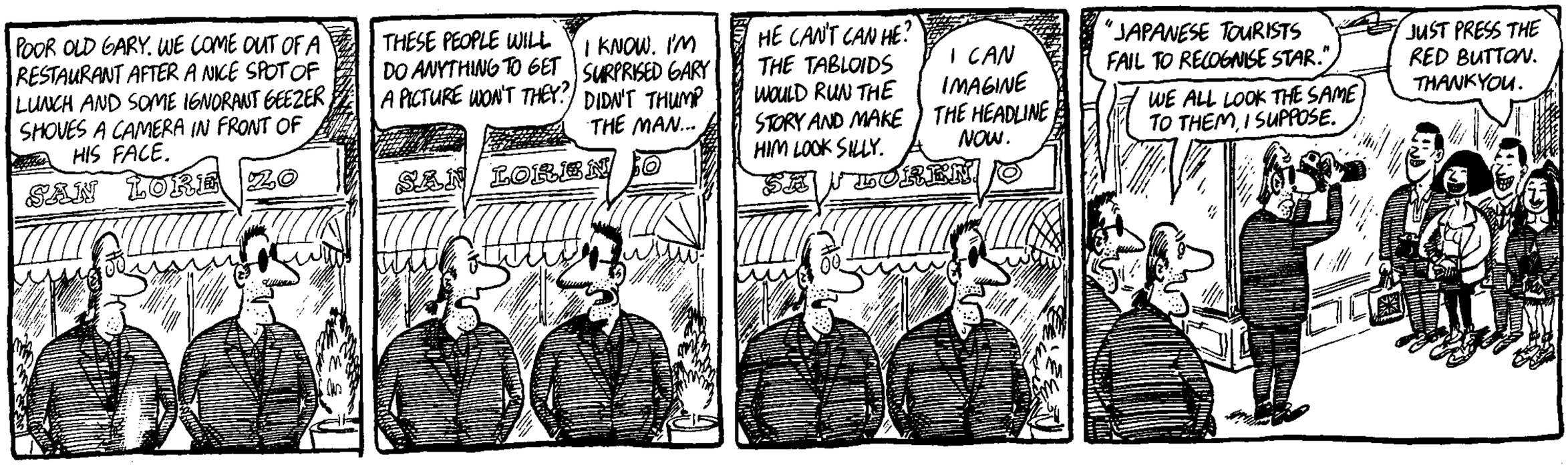
Thank you Brian.
Thank you James.

And now a look at
My name...

E.J. Thribb

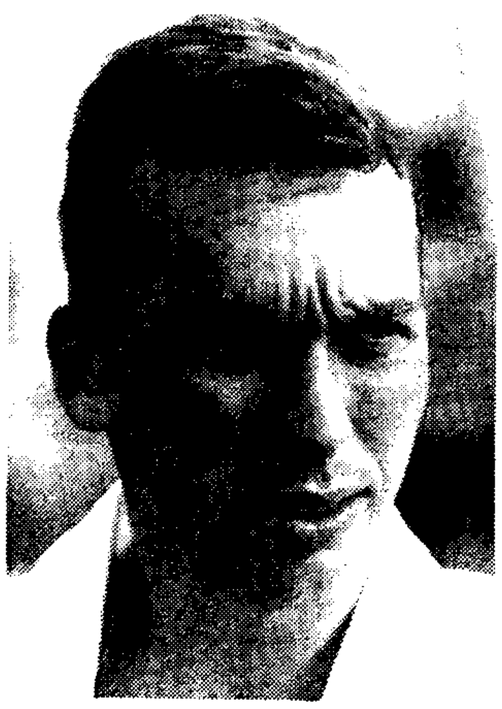
Great Bores Of Today.

"... we came last year and saw was it the Donizetti or was it La Bohème? I can't remember never mind it was marvellous it's terribly hard to get tickets but one of our clients is a sponsor and they get priority this salmon's delicious and the Chablis is wonderful and eating it out of doors makes it all taste so much better a friend of Emma's does it all for us and she calls it 'Hampers for Opera' it doesn't really matter about the rain does it? because there's such a marvellous atmosphere apparently the Foreign Secretary is here somewhere Jeremy saw him in the loo did you follow all the bit where the man jumps out the window and then comes in again? and why was the other chap hiding in the cupboard? if there's any more of that paté I wouldn't say no anyway the music's marvellous it just sort of flows over one I don't think £100 is a lot to pay when you think about what you're getting all these international names and everything I didn't know Mozart wrote operas did you? amazing fellow are there any strawberries left Diana?"


POOR OLD GARY. WE COME OUT OF A RESTAURANT AFTER A NICE SPOT OF LUNCH AND SOME IGNORANT GEEZER SHOVES A CAMERA IN FRONT OF HIS FACE.
SAN LORENZO
THESE PEOPLE WILL DO ANYTHING TO GET A PICTURE WON'T THEY?
I KNOW. I'M SURPRISED GARY DIDN'T THUMP THE MAN...
HE CAN'T CAN HE? THE TABLOIDS WOULD RUN THE STORY AND MAKE HIM LOOK SILLY.
I CAN IMAGINE THE HEADLINE NOW.
"JAPANESE TOURISTS FAIL TO RECOGNISE STAR."
WE ALL LOOK THE SAME TO THEM, I SUPPOSE.
JUST PRESS THE RED BUTTON. THANKYOU.

Those PLATTS in full

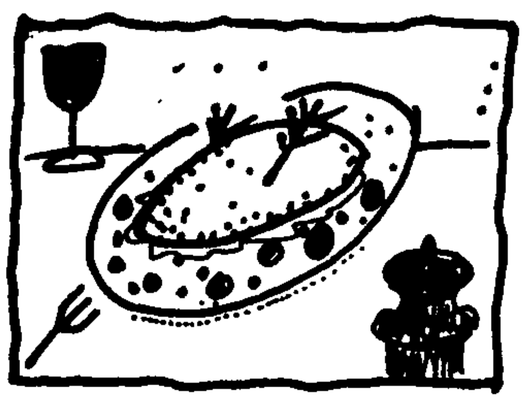
Sylvia Platt. Unbearded late American poet. Transferred to afterlife after season with Ted Hughes. No future.



David Platt. Unbearded England footballer playing in Italy who has lost his touch. Transferred to Sampdoria for £8bn. Future uncertain.

The Platters. Unbearded black popular singing group of the 1950s. Lost touch with charts and transferred for small fees to even smaller venues — e.g. The Roadhouse, New Dworkin. Future sad.

Steve Platt. Bearded *New Statesman* editor playing silly buggers in England. Has lost his marbles. Transferred thousands of pounds to John Major's bank account. Future of magazine uncertain.



Platt du Jour. Baby Breast of Crow in a Lemon Tartine, served with Greek Rosemary on a Bed of Salamon Fricassé. Future: served up again tomorrow.

(That's enough Platts. Ed.)

101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR (2)

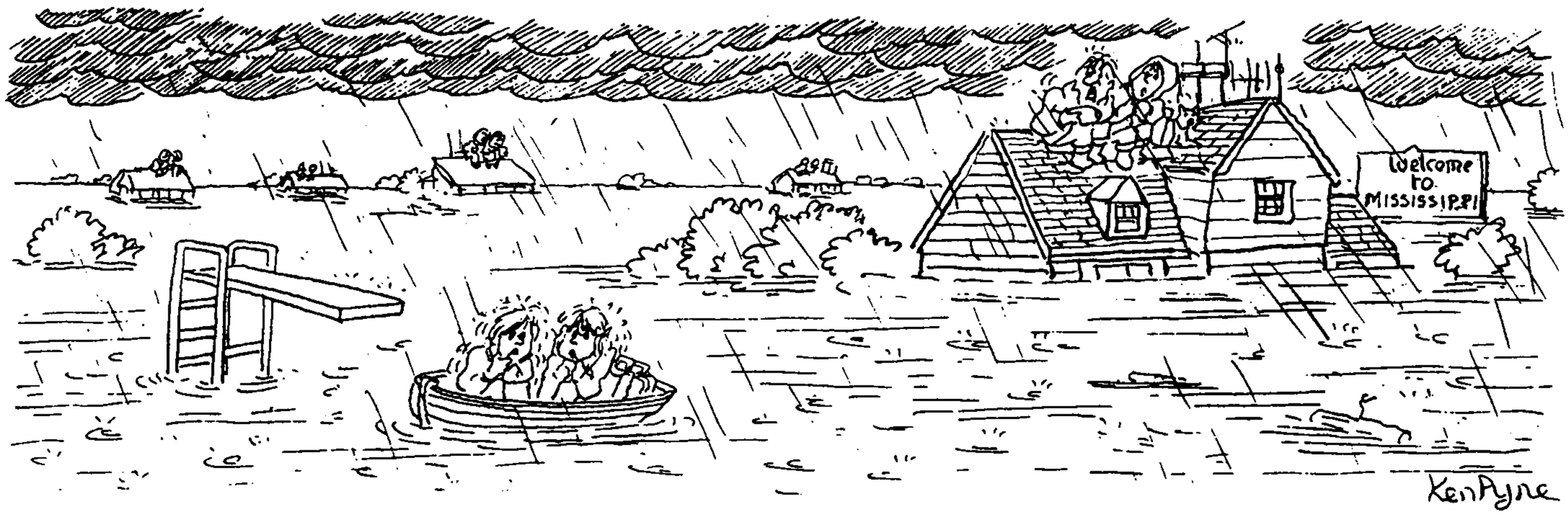
A HOOVER

30 July 1993 ● **THE SUNDAY TIMES**

TOP TEN BORES

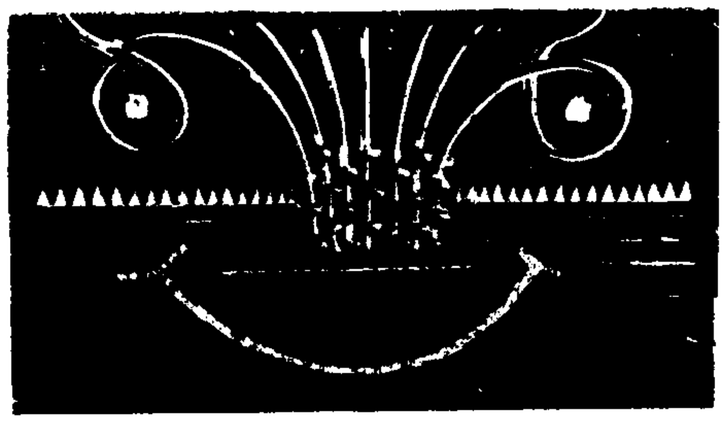
This Week		Last Week	Weeks On List
1	**John Monks** *(who he? Ed)*	–	–
2	**Melanie Phillips** *(who she? Ed)*	–	–
3	**Sir Patrick Sheahy** *(who she-he? Ed)*	–	–
4	**Social Chapter** *(what it? Ed)*	7	1,342
5	**Sir Michael Jagger** *(who was he? Ed)*	–	–
6	**Patricia Cahill & Karyn Smith** *(who they? Ed)*	–	–
7	**Jurassic Park** *(what that? Ed)*	–	60m. years
8	**Bishop of Birmingham** *(what pratt. Ed)*	–	–
9	**Nicholas Coleridge** *(Ed-in-Chief)*	–	–
10	**Floyd On Floor** *(whashat (burp)? Ed)*	still on floor	710

Top 10 Bores compiled with the help of the producers of *Sunset Boulevard*



"Look at that! Those goddamn Brubaker kids are in our swimming pool again!"

DIARY



DAVID BOWIE

Who am I? That's a question that's been haunting me for most of my life, I guess.

I have always created chameleon-like personaz for myself out of my boundless imagination. I suppose I xpressed this restless creativity, this relentless desire to be someone other than the someone that I would have been if I hadn't been someone else, most acutely in my song "Other" (1972):

"Other — don't call me brother
Or — na na na na — mother
Because I'm another
Run for cover
Na na na na Lover
What's that bird — is it a
Na na na na Plover? Maan!"

First I thought I was Ziggy Stardust, an androgynous sort of alien rockstar from outer space. But was I Ziggy or was Ziggy me? And was I me at all? So I went through a hell of a lot of psycho-spiritual self-discovery before embarking upon a truly massive persona-change. So now — as if by magic — I became Aladdin Sane. Who was Aladdin Sane? A sort of androgynous alien rockstar from outer space. That complete change of persona blew a lot of minds, maybe even my own, but I had to move on. Was I Aladdin or was Aladdin me? I was still searching, searching, searching, so I then underwent a complete change of physical and metaphysical persona in response to a number of psychological and paranormal pressurez that were upon me at the time and I came out of it as someone entirely different. I was now The Man Who Fell To Earth — an androgynous sort of alien rockstar from outer space, really.

Uncanny. That's the word most often used about my — uncanny! — ability to encapsulate the *zeitgeist*. It was a theme I xplored in my song "Zeitgeist" (1983):

"Zeitgeist — it's a *heist*
Zeitgeist — it's really quite nice-t
Zeitgeist — I once read of a writer called Kleist
Zeitgeist — I prefer my coffee hot to *iced*
(Chorus:) If you gotta geist, I'll give ya my zeit
Gimme gimme gimme your *zeitgeist* — maan!"

In the Seventiez, the *zeitgeist* meant that a lot of guyz were trying to suss out what was really going on in their own heads by turning to mime, to prose-poetry, to mind-expanding drugz, to existential phenomena and to good old rock 'n' roll — yeah! At this time, my mime troupe put on an xperimental show — which has since become legendary — to a prose-poem of mine called "Head". It involved this guy — me — miming being trapped inside an invisible container, completely unable to escape. Then his followers seek to proclaim him a kind of — what? — a kind of androgynous alien rockstar from outer space. Finally, he has to ask himself the literally amazing question, a question he's never asked before: am I the rockstar — or is the rockstar me? I guess it's a question we've all had to get our heads round at one time or another. Cheers.

Over the years, students of my *oeuvre* have been able to chart my moodz quite accurately through skilful interpretation and re-interpretation of my collected lyrix. For instance, the sharpest critics detected a darker side to Bowie in my album *A Darker Side* (1981), recorded in an unlit cellar in East Berlin when I was heavily into coke. In this period of my life, my new persona as a sort of androgynous alien rockstar from outer space was in danger of taking over my very soul. Reading between the lines of such lyrics as:

"Black Black Black
God I feel so black
I don't even want to wear a mac
Or even a jack-et — maan!"

the musicologist on *Rolling Stone* magazine detected "a new powerfully black mood in Bowie's writing" while the Bowie xpert in *Melody Maker* felt that "Bowie is beginning to explore his darker side — and on tracks like 'Black' the mood is undoubtedly dark, even black".

But my most recent work *Happy Again* has been judged by some critics as much lighter in outlook, and they've managed to detect a new spirit of optimism, even happiness, in lyrix such as:

"Happy happy happy
Happy happy happy
Happy happy happy
Happy happy happy
Christ I feel happy — maan!"
("New Spirit of Optimism", 1993)

I think this reflects a new feeling of happiness throughout the world after I got married. Once again, Bowie has plugged into the zeitgeist. So what does the future hold? Who can tell? Time is a jackal, feeding on itself. Time is a shower in a luxury hotel, stopping only when you turn off the tap. Time is a mirror hanging in a train speeding through a dark tunnel. Time is a tea-leaf discarded on the edge of a motorway and picked up by a skylark. Time is you. Time is me. What is the time? Coming up to ten to three.

In the mid-Eighties, I used to get very wound up in myself, my hopes and dreams and fears and paranoias, and I would only ever talk about myself. It was as if other people had ceased to exist. But I've come through that phase, and I now feel a new willingness to relinquish control over my emotions and to start really relating to other people, so that now I feel free to just sit down with a group of other people and talk about what I really think and feel, to talk of my hopes and dreams and fears and paranoias, almost as if all those other people weren't there, because I'm a very private person.

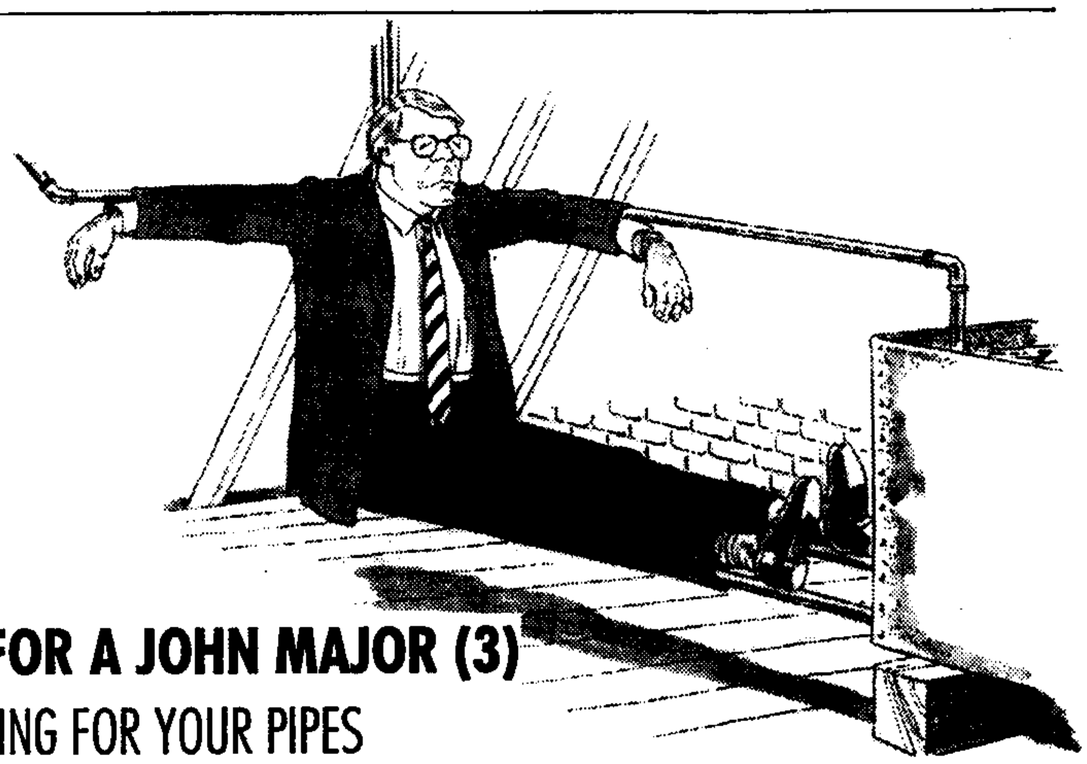
Bowiefact: The title of my now legendary song "Options Illusions Fears 11 (Berlin)" was originally "Boogie Baby (All Night Long)". I used the title "Boogie Baby (All Night Long)" on my album *Dreads and Galoshes* ('84) but I renamed it "Tibetan Harmonies 111" which I have since re-recorded live as "Boogie All Night Long (Baby)". I hope this puts your minds at rest. Love ya. David.

Prescription to aid NHS

IN last month's issue we published an article by Mr. Patrick Burns, in which he intended to state '. . . there is one area in which the health service can still make huge savings and that is by prescribing drugs generically. The difference in price between the expensive branded product and its generic equivalent can be massive, and yet many doctors continue to prescribe the expensive brand long after the patent has expired and the product has been available as a generic.'

Unfortunately at the printing works (just as the form was about to be printed) the word *patent* was wrongly 'corrected' to *patient*.

Hampshire – The County Magazine



101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR (3)

LAGGING FOR YOUR PIPES

Literary Review

Moll flounders

Moll: The Making of Molly Parkin: An Autobiography
Molly Parkin
(Gollancz, £15.99)

THE "clinging to the wreckage" school of autobiography has always been a fail-safe way to pay the rent. Can't take the juice any more? Talent gone? Grey matter dissolving in a mulch of amphetamine sulphate? Well, put it down in writing lad.

Just as Jeffrey Bernard has spent 20 years conducting a career on the back of his inability to obey doctors' orders, so along comes Molly Parkin, determined to milk a decent livelihood out of the — one scrabbles for the right non-judgmental word — er, *difficulties* that have attended her shaky progress through life.

These days, of course, Molly Parkin — born plain Molly Thomas in South Wales a shade over six decades ago — looks simply like a creature from a vanished age. The sixties are gone, darling, and who but a fool would want them back? But most people in their early 30s will retain some faint memory of the days in which she strayed into the margins of their consciousness: the smutty novels in which one used lubriciously to browse, the delicate *Sun* columns about how her husband fancied Elsie Tanner but she didn't mind. Even then, apparently, her great days as a fashion journo were already gone, gone along with half-a-dozen jobs and the faintest vestiges of sobriety, but miraculously she hung on, beat the drugs, the drink and the angst, and now emerges more or less unrepentant to tell us all about it.

Moll fills in some of the gaps in this shambling transit. Very predictable gaps they are too. The Welsh childhood, the sex — Messalina in her prime would have been hard pressed to keep up with Ms Parkin when the mood was upon her; the drink (a quarter-century on the bottle); the husbands. If anything so disjointed could be said to have a dynamic — though for someone who was so often out of her head she has an uncanny ability to remember decades-old conversation — it lies in a confident estimation of her talents.

Ms Parkin's books were plainly the dandiest productions on the block, and she suggests that she was "highly regarded as an intuitive interviewer". Or perhaps the secret lay in coat-tail chasing. Some of the funniest bits come when she attempts to insinuate herself into the company of the rich and famous, accosting Woody Allen in a restaurant, brown-nosing Bette Midler ("she saw by my appearance that I wasn't the average run-of-the-mill journalist"). A fine clue to the general tone of the book does taking out the back catalogue of your extravagances in public and simpering over them really count as sincerity?

Looking back on a lifetime's dissipation from the vantage point of a newly acquired spiritual peace, Ms Parkin's tone is horribly uneven: half-regretful, half coy, as if she can't quite make up her mind whether to applaud, giggle or condemn. This uncertainty is a pity, because it undermines the much more revealing early part of the book — an account of a tough valleys childhood, brutal father and adolescence in the blitz. All this ought to have the capacity to move, but if we can't take the Vamp in the Hat routine seriously, what are we to make of the remarks about her grandparents — "I would sleep in many beds, with many bodies, known and unknown, later in life, but these are two are the ones I still recall with the most ten-

can be found in the picture of Moll in her finery captioned "look for Zandra Rhodes and Fenella Fielding". No doubt the woman in the extreme top corner is indeed Miss Fielding, but you would be hard pressed to confirm it on the strength of the two eyes and a fringe vouchsafed to view.

And so on, through the whole vista of sexual encounters with everyone you've ever heard of — James Robertson Justice, John Mortimer, a whole rugby XV once — champagne for breakfast and waking up in last night's vomit. Casting my eye down the blurb I had a pretty good idea of what I might find, and, yes, ,there it was, a reference to the author's "total honesty". Memoirs of this sort are always "honest". But derness". Much as you appreciate the sentiment, the temptation to mark it all down as just another part of the pose is all but irresistible.

Curiously, in the end one can live with the gang-bangs and the gleeful indiscretions. Less easy to live with, though, is the degree of indulgence extended by a charitable media. One of the features of the publishing world at the moment, what with cutbacks and list-pruning, is the inability of a great many quite decent writers — people one has actually heard of — to get their books published.

All around us, while talent dies on the vine and the Bloomsbury air hums with the sound of scratching pens as publishers write famous authors' books for them, the likes of Molly Parkin continue to blossom confidently into print. It is this, rather than the tales of what James Robertson Justice did to her with a lightbulb, that stick in one's throat.

Books & Bookmen

☐ B.T. BATSFORD, founded in 1843 and celebrating its 150th anniversary, is not a publishing house that commands the headlines these days.

Just before Christmas 20 percent of the office staff was made redundant, and no pay rise made to any of those remaining: the previous year everyone had received £300. Someone on maternity leave was made redundant, the directors hoping she would be too exhausted to sue for wrongful dismissal. So it proved. The editorial director tells sympathetic authors she suffered hormonal problems and left of her own volition.

A few months later saw a boardroom coup presided over by major shareholder Bobby "Sox" Cox to boot long-standing md Peter Kemmis-Betty to president and have him work at home. As he is also a major shareholder this is the most that could be achieved. Bobby Sox has installed herself in his old office. Suddenly there was cash for a new deputy chairman, chief executive and sales director, but no pay rises or bonuses until the shareholders have been paid, they all being directors.

The 50-year-old receptionist was given a written warning for wearing a pair of trousers which weren't ironed, and now has been sacked, as has the publicity manager.

■ BEVERLY Anderson has been wielding the axe as chief executive of Book Trust. Those in charge of children's books and publicity were among the first to go, and as a result the Booker Prize people withdrew their funding of £130,000 from Book Trust.

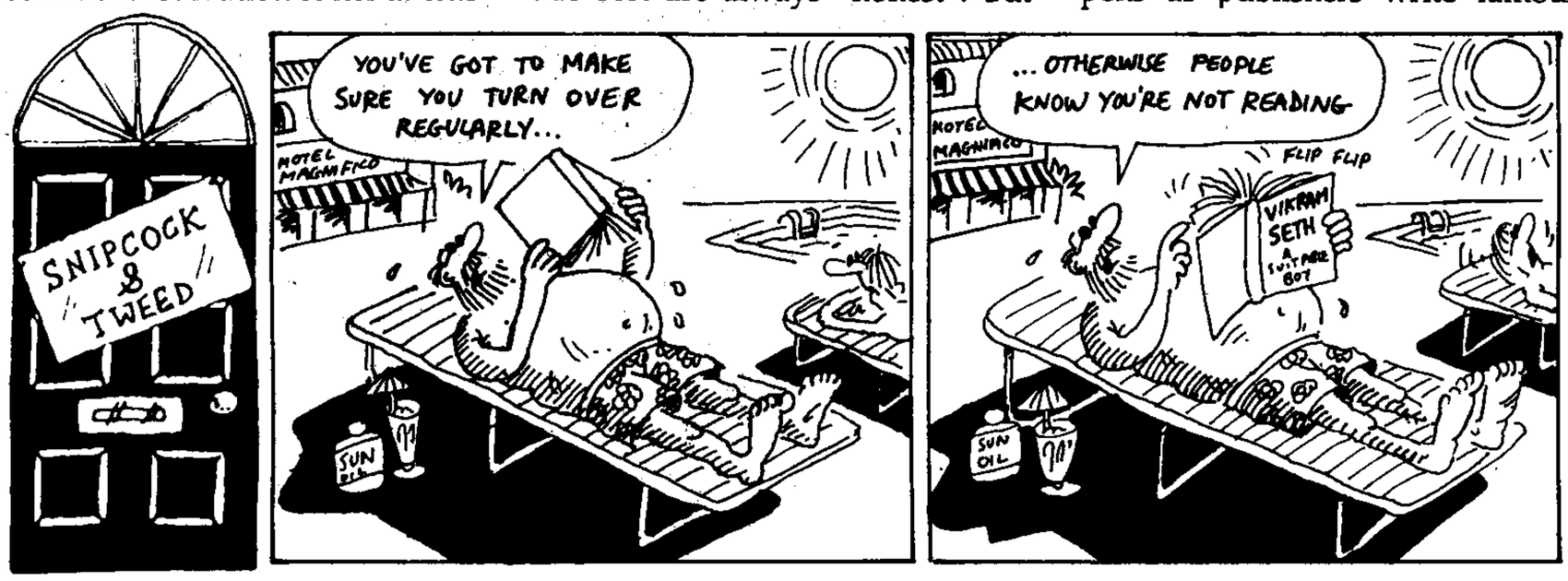
Then Beverly, having failed to close down Book Trust in Scotland, compensated by dismissing her finance man as, had he stayed, he might have pointed out that Book Trust was, er, bankrupt, which may just explain why it is hardly a force any more in the promotion of books, which is its *raison d'etre.*

☐ *THE editor's note to Bookworm (Eye 824) questioning the relevance of recording publishers' job changes is easily answered.*

In the days when authors actually wrote their own books, the identity of the publisher was immaterial. At a time when a fair proportion of successful writers are unable to produce publishable work without editorial assistance, though, games of musical chairs of this sort suddenly taken on a huge importance.

The news that Douglas or Barbara's editor is leaving Heinemann or Hutchinson increasingly means that Douglas or Barbara is leaving too. As Bookworm points out, the reason so many publishers now write novels is that they have found out how much better they are at it than their authors.

'Bookworm'



In the City

WHILE Asil Nadir may have lapsed into silence about his much-hyped Watergate-style threats to damage further the rattled Major government (other than the damp squib dossier he circulated last week), others with an interest in the Tory fanciers of the Turkish Delight remain hyperactive.

Inquiries continue into uncorroborated allegations of a past link between Nadir and trade secretary Michael Heseltine, who has firmly denied any recollection of meeting the fugitive and challenged Nadir to publish his "bombshells". Hardly the action of a wanted man!

Amazingly, one suggested source for this clearly absurd rumour is none other than suspended Inland Revenue investigator Michael Allcock, who probed the offshore Nadir network in search of tax on the lucrative Polly Peck share dealing activities by mysterious brass plate companies. Given Heseltine's denials of any recalled meeting, it is obvious that this must be as fanciful as Allcock's equally spurious claim to have instigated the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) investigation that resulted in Nadir's arrest.

Perhaps Allcock, and others in pursuit of this unicorn, have been mislead by the coincidence of the involvement of accountants Rawlinson & Hunter in the affairs of both Heseltine and Nadir.

The Mayfair-based accountants were Nadir's longtime advisers on his private companies, setting up and administering much of the offshore network through associates in Jersey and the Isle of Man.

The Jersey based R&H Trust, a nominee company acting for unidentified clients, not only acted for Nadir interests but also appears as a minor shareholder in certain key companies in the Haymarket publishing group which is controlled by Heseltine family trusts. But R&H is said not to act for Heseltine or his family. Any Rawlinson & Hunter connection therefore is purely coincidental.

THE SCHIZOPHRENIC BBC is preparing two programmes with not only different but conflicting premises. *Panorama* is said to be taking the "Nadir as victim" party line parroted by former Northern Ireland minister Michael Mates and other Asil mouthpieces. Meanwhile, the *Money Programme* has been working on a documentary explaining why Polly Peck collapsed into a black hole of Nadir's own making.

Both projects have at times seemed to be busy killing off the other; but both still seem to be alive although there has been some concern inside the BBC hierarchy that the *Panorama* product might appear somewhat too sympathetic to a bail jumper accused of stealing £372 million and wiping out a £2 billion company. Nevertheless, it seems that one if not both programmes are still on track for broadcast after October when it becomes clear whether the trial of Nadir's luckless co-defendant, former company secretary John Turner, proceeds.

NADIR'S link to some, but not all, his Tory helpers and to those journalists seeking confirmation of the plot theory has been PR man and Heseltine friend Christopher Morgan, and his inept partner Mark "Mr Berry" Rogerson.

Morgan maintains he has only been on the Nadir case since March 1991 and is doing it all for love of justice, plus a contribution towards expenses. Both claims are open to doubt.

Certainly Morgan was acting for Nadir from soon after, if not before, he was arrested in December 1990. His then recently formed Morgan Partnership was already a creditor of South Audley Management, controlled by Nadir private interests, for £15,356 when SAM was threatened with being wound-up by its creditors in January 1991. SAM also had on its payroll future Tory MPs Nirj Deva and Michael Stephen, who advised the Turkish Cypriot Association here. SAM was finally wound-up last year.

After such an expensive experience — assuming Morgan, unlike other creditors, was not paid — it would be a very charitable PR man indeed who would agree to act unpaid upfront — especially for a fugitive in a country where no debt could be enforced.

NADIR's "dossier" merely comprises Michael Mates's already broadcast recital of claims that the man who was Polly Peck is the victim of the SFO; bolstered by selective transcripts of *in camera* court hearings after the £3.5 million bribe allegation surfaced; and correspondence between Anthony Scrivener, Nadir's QC and near neighbour in Northern Cyprus, and Sir Nicholas Lyell, the attorney-general.

One remarkable courtroom aside, given that Nadir and his advisers/supporters claim the SFO manufactured the plot to bribe the trial judge, is the apparent claim by Nadir when interviewed by the police that he had met the judge, Mr Justice Tucker. Tucker firmly denied this in court.

What also emerges is confirmation of an earlier *Eye* report that it was Scrivener, not the SFO, who pushed for Tucker to be replaced. After first withdrawing an application in November that Tucker should stand down because of the bribe allegation, Nadir's man then renewed the application and pursued it to the court of appeal once Nadir had been arrested and questioned about the allegation.

The SFO never made such an application, yet the whole basis for the Nadir claim is that Tucker was to be replaced by inventing the bribe plot because he was too favourable to the defence. Also ignored in this scenario is that the 46 charges Tucker dismissed on legal grounds — the supposed basis for his favouritism — had been restored by the time Scrivener made his application in March as a result of a ruling by the law lords in a separate case which clarified the law in the SFO's favour.

Like Mates, Scrivener seems to have been ready to accept or interpret favourably almost anything Nadir told him. So, just like Mates, Scrivener in a letter to Lyell on 6 November alleged that the suspended tax investigator Michael Allcock "has unfortunately disappeared from the jurisdiction". Mates made a similar allegation about Allcock's "flight from justice" in a letter to Lyell on 17 March. In fact Allcock was all the time at home in Colchester. I wonder who said he wasn't, and why those who were told never checked?

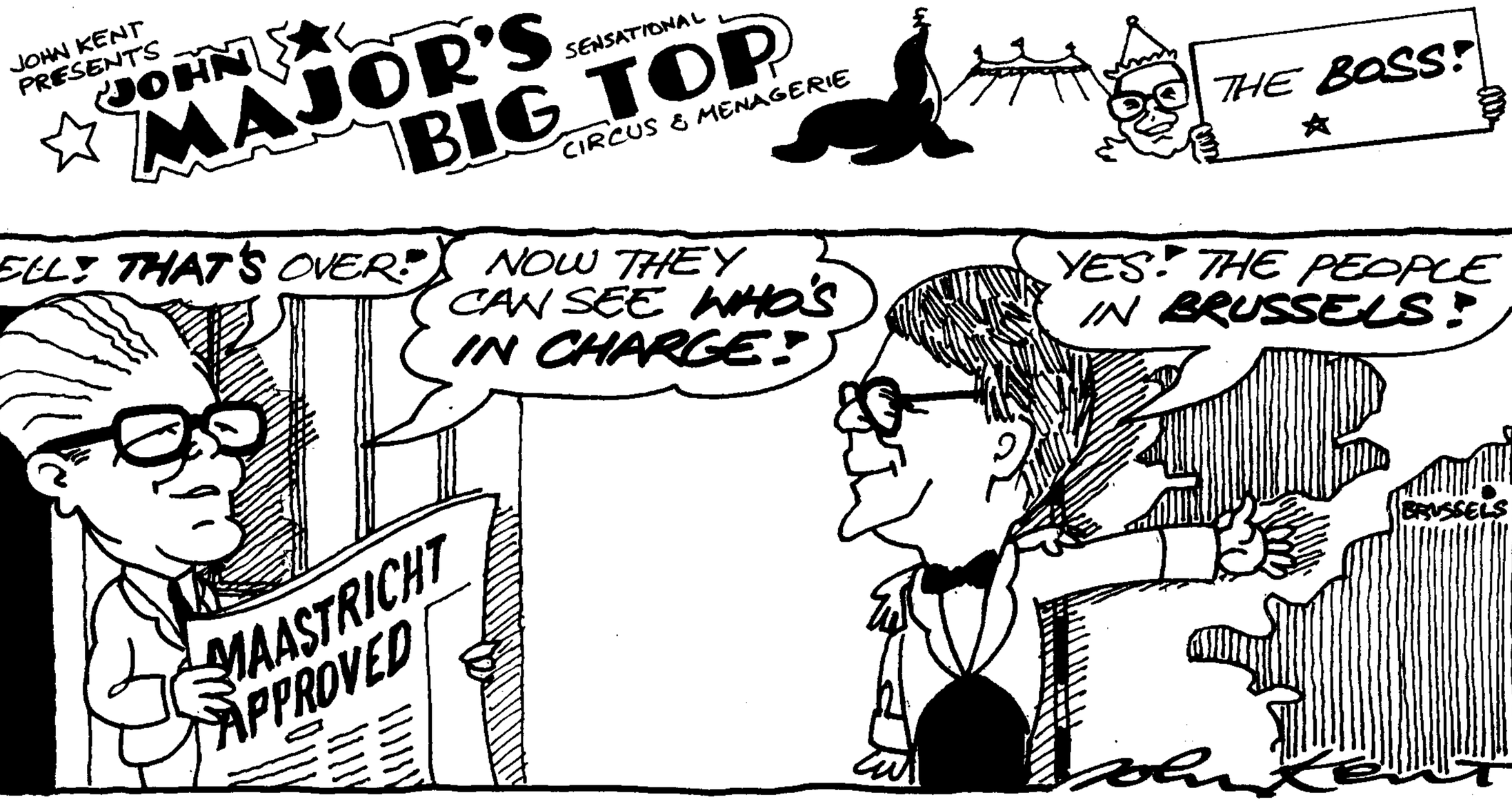
ASIL NADIR is not the only tainted tycoon to target the hard-up Tories or to be targeted by Tory fundraisers. But it seems Christopher Moran, the man even Lloyd's kicked out, is struggling in his bid to win friends and influence with the Conservatives.

Moran — recent subject of a fawning *Sunday Telegraph* profile — had been cultivated as a result of his friendship with Algy Cluff, a near estate neighbour in Scotland and until last month a key Tory fundraiser.

Alas, word of Moran's eviction from Lloyd's, his acquittal on fraud charges and allegations of insider trading by the US securities & exchange commission (only the hard-to-avoid Lloyd's expulsion sullied the pages of the *Telegraph*, where Cluff is well connected having sold the *Spectator* to Conrad Black) is said to have scared even the Tories away. Not, however, before he had met several past and present ministers.

SOME WEEKS ago the *Sunset Times* devoted a whole page to "one man bands" who breach the Cadbury code, which suggests that major companies should split the roles of chairman and chief executive. The code, it explained, was "aimed at curbing the excessive power of business leaders"; and the article listed 14 companies where this still prevailed and another 13 which were "led by big personalities". One company missing from both lists was News Corporation, ultimate owner of the *Sunset Times*. Its chairman and chief executive is one Rupert Murdoch — but then News is an Australian company, and so not covered by the Cadbury code.

'Slicker'



footnotes

LUTINE LOOTING

Fate and Lyell. . .

THE Lloyd's of London scandal has shifted to the serious fraud office (SFO), where officers have been spending hours poring over documents liberally supplied by angry soon-to-be-impoverished names. It will be left to SFO director George Staple to decide whether or not to make any arrests.

Mr Staple could well turn for advice to his former colleagues in the enormous City solicitors' firm, Clifford Chance. A senior partner there, Leon Boshoff, won the undying gratitude of many Lloyd's names when he saved them from bankruptcy over the Sasse syndicate scandal in the early 1980s. The Lloyd's hierarchy, too, was deeply impressed by Boshoff's work, and he is now instructed by the errors and omissions insurers of the Feltrim managing agency (run by a man called Fagan) against the 1,800 names who are suing it.

If Mr Staple decides he wants to prosecute anyone, he will need the approval of the attorney-general, the Rt Hon Sir Nicholas Lyell MP. Sir Nicholas is a name at Lloyd's who is involved in 25 syndicates, including the troubled 418, run by Lloyd's vice chairman Stephen Merritt, which is even being sued by the executors of Merritt's own mother.

Lyell's syndicates are 52, 65, 209, 228, 282, 418, 448, 488, 609, 764, 855, 362, 820, 469, 484, 510, 512, 839, 1066, 1067, 1068, 913, 254, 824, 48. Any day now, Lyell will be getting his "solvency statement" which will show that his losses, like those of all the Lloyd's 34,000 members, are up to twice as bad as he has been told heretofore.

Ministers like Lyell have to surrender all their directorships when they take office to avoid any conflict of interest. For some reason that no one has yet clearly explained, ministers do not have to stop being names at Lloyd's — even though Lloyd's insists that names are "sole traders" of insurance.

Henry and St George

THERE WAS tremendous excitement at Lloyd's of London in 1976 when the racehorse owner Charles St George (né Barbaro) recruited Henry Cooper as a "name".

Cooper was interviewed and photographed in the splendour of the Room at Lloyd's. His remarks about "this wonderful institution" were widely published and everyone basked in the certainty that our 'Enery would enjoy a rich old age.

Almost at once things started to go wrong for St George, his broking company Oakeley Vaughan and Co Ltd, and his underwriting agency OVU. There were dark rumours of too much greed — taking on business which couldn't be paid for — and that some of the famous new recruits had not been given a true picture of their syndicates' liabilities. Among the unlucky syndicates was aviation 862, the jewel in Henry Cooper's crown.

In its leisurely way, Lloyd's set up an inquiry under committee member Henry Chester. Chester's report in 1981 was such a shocker that three directors of OVU, Messrs B.M. Bowen, M.K. Whitelock and James St George, son of Charles, were suspended from Lloyd's for five years. Charles St George was reprimanded; but after a quiet meeting with the Lloyd's chairman Sir Peter Green it was agreed that his reprimand be kept secret, provided Mr St George agreed to hold no more than 10 per cent of the shares in OVU. Mr St George agreed at once. Lloyd's kept its decision secret, and St George coolly kept his OVU shares (three years later he still had 61 per cent).

New directors were brought in to Oakeley Vaughan, but the syndicates continued to suffer through the greed and incompetence of their managers. In 1983, for instance, poor Henry Cooper's syndicate 862 reported a loss of 170 per cent. The following year, the accountancy firm Ernst & Whinney was sent in by Lloyd's to investigate. The investigators found all sorts of horrors at OV and OVU, and asked Lloyd's if it could make further detailed inquiries. Lloyd's agreed.

Then suddenly, after another of those quiet meetings with Sir Peter Green, the second inquiry was stopped just as it was getting warm. Ernst & Whinney's interim report, published on 19 August 1985, was puzzled. "At our meeting with you on 26 July 1985 you informed us that due to certain events affecting the position of the companies referred to in the terms of reference, and their relationship with Lloyd's, you wished us to cease our inquiries. . ."

So the dogs were called off — but the carcase continued to rot. In 1988 the whole Oakeley Vaughan enterprise went into receivership owing £2.5 million. The "run-off — outstanding business — was taken over by a new agency called CCGH. For four years CCGH tried to get hold of a statement of account of money owing to Oakeley Vaughan and Co. Those running CCGH, as well as names who had lost fortunes on Oakeley Vaughan syndicates, believed that these documents might uncover large sums of money due to them, but whisked away to secret accounts in the Bahamas.

At last, on 11 November 1992, CCGH got a high court order enabling it to inspect the documents, which were kept at Codham Hall Farm, near Romford, Essex.

Celebrations did not last long. That very night Codham Hall Farm went up in flames. Police are still anxious to interview arson suspects. But the documents, the *Eye* can reveal, have almost been preserved and may soon be available for inspection.

RACING CERTAINTIES: Cooper and George

If they reveal anything unpleasant about Charles St George, they will not worry him. He died in May last year. An obituary in *The Daily Telegraph* by Jeffrey Barnard ended: "He might have been the kindest man I have ever met."

Henry Cooper, who recently sold his three Lonsdale belts to try to meet his Lloyd's liabilities, was not quoted.

THE THINGS THEY SAY

"Rosyth will survive. I want Rosyth to survive with Trident. There is a level playing field. It is half time and we are up three goals to nil."

Ian Lang, secretary of state for Scotland, Glasgow Herald, 14 May, only six weeks before his government decided to dump Rosyth (no Tory MPs) for Plymouth (two Tory MPs).

FIVE GO FREE IN CATFORD

WHEN Michael Hanratty was arrested and taken to Catford police station in south London, he was asked if he was related to James Hanratty who was hanged in 1962 for the A6 murder. He replied: "Yes, he was my uncle."

Young Michael gave his first names as Michael Joseph. A witty policeman wrote it down on the charge sheet as Michael "James". Catford police station echoed with laughter at this hilarious satire.

Michael, his sister Dawn, brother Darren, and two friends, Julia Murphy and Brian Bradshaw were charged with a mixture of public order offences and assault on police officers in what police alleged had been a fracas outside a pub.

Police said they had been called to the pub to deal with a complaint about after-hours drinking. When they arrived, they alleged, they were threatened by Michael Hanratty with his fist. A crowd of youths, including the five arrested, started to shout "Shoot the Bastards!" at the police, who moved in to clear the crowd away and were assaulted, bitten and kicked. The arrests followed.

As soon as they could see their lawyers, the five told a completely different story.

They said they had gone to the pub to celebrate Michael's birthday. As they left, two officers were walking up the steps into the pub. One of them commented to Brian Bradshaw (who was the only black person in the group) that he was ugly. Dawn protested that the policeman was not so pretty himself. The five made their way down the road to a Chinese restaurant, but before they could get there, they said, a crowd of police arrived and attacked them from behind. The five say they were hurled against wire meshing and flung to the ground.

Happy return to the Chandos pub: Michael and Brian (back), Darren and Dawn

The bitterly-contested case was expected to last several days, but it began and ended at Thames magistrates' court on 19 July before stipendiary magistrate David Fingleton. Why had the police gone to the pub? This important question could have been answered by the log of radio calls to and from Catford police station. For months the defence had tried to get the logs. Now they asked for a court order to deliver them. Fingleton refused.

PC Graham Key, the first officer to arrive at the pub, then gave evidence. He agreed he had asked the young people to move and that they had done so. "It seemed to be the end of the incident," he said. Inspector Peter Sturge then started to give evidence. As the case broke for lunch, it was clear that the consistency of police evidence was crucial. Mr Fingleton issued a solemn warning to Key and Sturge that they must not talk to any other officers.

Blatantly, in front of the defence solicitor and the prosecutor, Mr Singh, PC Key immediately started talking to another officer and then repaired with Sturge and all the officers involved in the case to the police room. When this was reported to the magistrate, he was furious. He invited the prosecutor to drop the case. After speaking to the crown prosecution service (CPS), Mr Singh refused. The magistrate then told the defence to ask no questions, called the police to read out their notebooks, and concluded that their evidence was inconsistent and tainted by their talking to each other in the lunch interval.

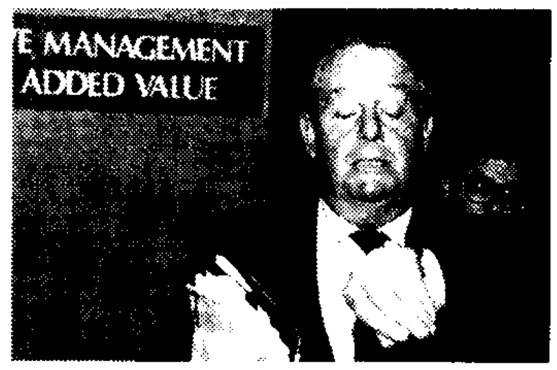
He dismissed the case. All five defendants walked free — and the formidable partnership of Catford police and the CPS had struck another blow for law and order in south London.

Jammy Atkins

■ PSA Building Management has been a profitable publicly-owned company, so obviously it had to be flogged off to the government's chums in the construction industry.

Amec got the south-east division; John Mowlem the north-east; and Serco won Scotland. All these companies had to pay good money for their purchases. In only one case did the government resort to the "Tarmac principle" — paying a favoured company to take over a profitable public enterprise. The lucky company was W.S. Atkins, which has been given PSA Building Management, Manchester — plus a useful £11.5 million of taxpayers' money.

This is a remarkable achievement for W.S. Atkins: it gave only £500 to the Tory party in 1992 (plus another paltry £200 in 1990). The company's popularity with the government is believed to have more to do with its role as construction supervisor for the defence industries in Saudi Arabia, where Margaret Thatcher did the biggest arms deal in history, (renegotiated by John Major.)



Sir Patrick's Pence

■ ALL THOSE surly coppers who complain about the Sheehy report into the future of policing should understand how well they can do under a performance-related pay scheme.

Consider, for example, the position of Sir Patrick Sheehy who wrote the report. Although he only got a miserable basic pay rise last year — just under £44,000, or about 7.5 per cent, taking his salary to a wretched £624,429 — luckily he was entitled to a performance-related bonus. This was £356,250, which brought his total pay up to a not unreasonable £980,679.

The performance bonus reflected the astonishing success of British American Tobacco, Sir Patrick's company, whose profits nearly doubled to £1.6 billion. BAT's main business is selling tobacco all over the world, which causes more avoidable death and illness than any other British product, including arms.

How red is their Valley?

THE relationship between Labour and the trade unions is not a special subject at Thames Valley University, an amalgam of the former polytechnics at Ealing and Slough.

The chancellor is Paul Hamlyn, who last year donated £100,000 to the Labour party to help it develop a policy on the arts. His deep commitment to Labour does not extend as far as trade unions.

Hamlyn is the biggest shareholder in Reeds, whose management decided recently to de-recognise the unions in all its publications. Mr Hamlyn explained that his company preferred a "one-to-one relationship" when negotiating pay and conditions with employees. This view did not inspire the aforesaid employees, 96 per cent of whom voted by ballot to retain union negotiating rights.

Mike Fitzgerald

Paul Hamlyn

Mr Hamlyn's line on these matters is enthusiastically supported by the university's vice-chancellor, Mike Fitzgerald. He too boasts of his membership of the Labour party. "I have a fire in my belly about picking up the torch and running with it" claims the hirsute vice chancellor (*Evening Standard*, 2 January).

This fire doesn't seem to stretch as far as trade unions or public ownership. Computing and catering at Thames Valley University have been privatised, and academic subject groups, which allowed the staff some say in the running of the university, have been replaced by smaller much less influential subject quality groups.

The following motion recently went to ballot among members of the Thames Valley branch of the lecturers' union, NATFHE: "This branch has no confidence in the vice chancellor".

There voted: 181 in favour of the motion, 12 against.

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Warren Mitchell, on once being a Communist, The Telegraph Magazine

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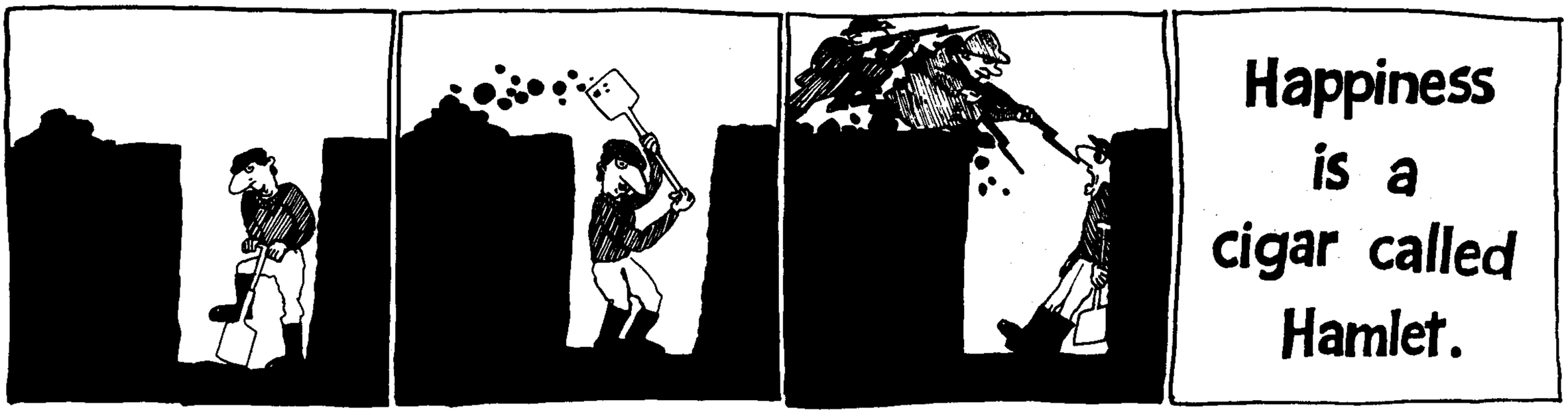

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HANDSOME GRADUATE male, 25, 6'3", seeks intelligent attractive sensual woman (married or single) age 20-40 for sexual friendship, discretion assured. Oxon/Bucks/Berks/London. Box 7625.

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GAELOPHILE, LIBRAN, fifty, unmarried, returning London after years overseas, seeks happy humorous French, Irish or Scottish woman fond of music, literature and poetry, Oriental art, animals, countrysides and big old cities. No suburban cat lovers, fatties or hairy-legged ones thank you. Box 2025.

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VERY PRESENTABLE male, 24, successful with great sense of humour, told good looking, seeks independent or married woman for uncomplicated relationship. Discretion assured. Box 3625.

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SENSITIVE, CARING female, 21, seeks unattached man to cheer her up. No Tories please! Box 2425.

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UNASHAMEDLY SENSUAL woman sought by 56 year old man, married, humorous, quietly virile, 5'6", for uncomplicated lust. West Country/M4 corridor/S. Wales. Box 3125.

LARGE(ISH) MAN, 35, with scientific bent seeks small(ish) woman with arty inclination for attraction of opposites. Midlands/wherever. Box 3725.

MALE NOT UNATTRACTIVE, slim, caring, affluent, intelligent, virile, seeks sensuous female for dining, holidays. London. Box 3825.

AGEING TOYBOY, 39, tall, stylish, romantic, seeks glamorous older lady. Photo please. Box 3925.

FRANZ KAFKA, 31, seeks Dora Dymant. Box 4025.

LIVELY, ROMANTIC, athletic professional male, 27, seeks fun-loving, caring woman for good times and companionship. Photo please. Manchester. Box 4125.

BABE WITH BRAINS on board required soonest by mad scientist. Oxford/London/Planet X. Box 4225.

MALE 30, EX-MODEL, married, seeks married woman, London. Photo? Usual discretion. Box 4325.

TALL, VERY GOOD looking young man, 35, separated, rock star appearance and lifestyle seeks neglected housewife/single to pamper. Total discretion with no ties. Just fun. London/anywhere. ALA. Photo. Box 4425.

SINGLE MALE, 50s, offers alternative indecent proposal: You don't tell your husband, I won't give you a million pounds. Photo and witty repy please. Oscar performance??? Leeds. Box 4525.

ACADEMIC MALE, tall, long haired, caring, sensitive, weird SOH, bit of a hippie. Into music and film. Searching for soulmate. Why don't you write me? Box 4625.

ATHLETIC, ATTRACTIVE, smallish, shy but passionate, sporty, intelligent, broad-minded girl (!) 20s/30s, with weird sense of humour sought by well-travelled professional male (29) of similar(ish) description for spare time/holiday happenings! Yorks but mobile. Photo appreciated. Box 4725.

INTELLIGENT GRADUATE male, single, 32, emotionally aware, recovering workaholic, seeks independent female for freindship, possibly relationship. Likes wine, dine, classical music, analysis, languages, travel. London. Box 4825.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, early 40s, well travelled and adventurous, likes piloting planes, making music, swimming, seeks well educated, slim, attractive and cheerful n/s female for fun/friendship/romance. Hants/Dorset. Box 4925.

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PROFESSIONAL MAN (46), London based, seeks sensual lady for steamy relationship. Ring 0839 516922

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AGING JETSETTER, young 50s, fun loving, attractive, slim, blonde female, seeking intelligent, genuine, easygoing man, who enjoys socialising, dining out with a good SOH. Ring 0839 516036

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SPARKLING, SEXY, good looking guy, 33, seeks bright and beautiful woman. Ring 0839 516110

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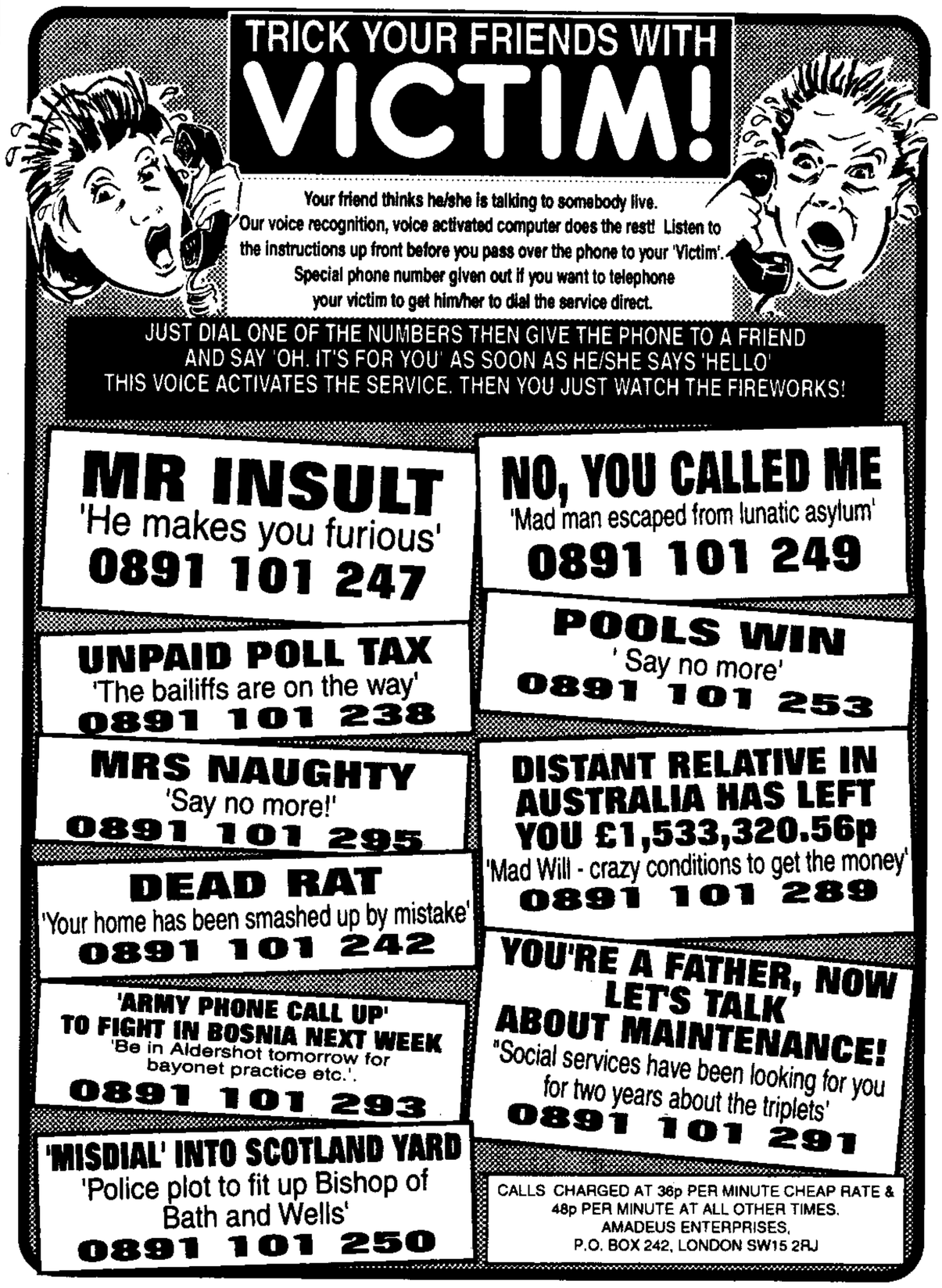
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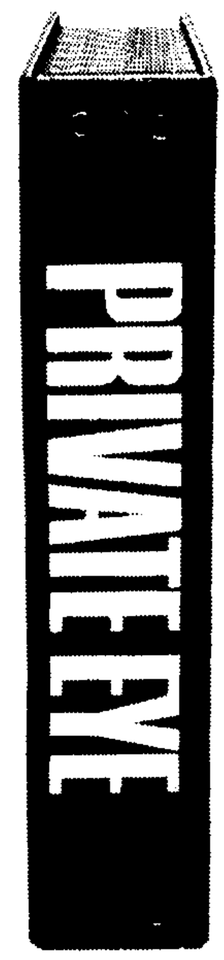

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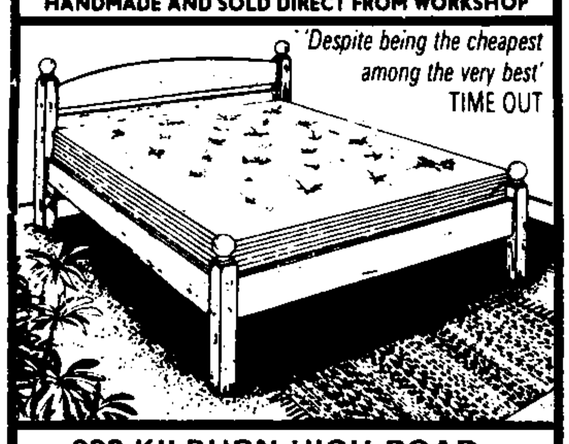

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